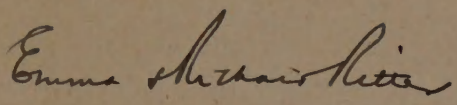

THEORY OF HISTORY

PUBLISHED ON THE FOUNDATION
ESTABLISHED IN MEMORY OF
PHILIP HAMILTON McMILLAN
OF THE CLASS OF 1894, YALE COLLEGE

Theory of History

BY

FREDERICK J. TEGGART

PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AUTHOR OF
"THE PROCESSES OF HISTORY"

NEW HAVEN
YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON · HUMPHREY MILFORD · OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
1925

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THE

PHILIP HAMILTON McMILLAN MEMORIAL

PUBLICATION FUND

The present volume is the fifth work published by the Yale University Press on the Philip Hamilton McMillan Memorial Publication Fund. This Foundation was established December 12, 1922, by a gift to Yale University in pursuance of a pledge announced on Alumni University Day in February, 1922, of a fund of $100,000 bequeathed to James Thayer McMillan and Alexis Caswell Angell, as Trustees, by Mrs. Elizabeth Anderson McMillan, of Detroit, to be devoted by them to the establishment of a memorial in honor of her husband.

He was born in Detroit, Michigan, December 28, 1872, prepared for college at Phillips Academy, Andover, and was graduated from Yale in the Class of 1894. As an undergraduate he was a leader in many of the college activities of his day, and within a brief period of his graduation was called upon to assume heavy responsibilities in the management and direction of numerous business enterprises in Detroit; where he was also a Trustee of the Young Men's Christian Association and of Grace Hospital. His untimely death, from heart disease, on October 4, 1919, deprived his city of one of its leading citizens and his University of one of its most loyal sons.

PREFACE

THE present publication is a continuation of a series of studies which includes: "The Circumstance or the Substance of History," *American Historical Review*, 15 (1910), pp. 709-719: reprinted, Berkeley, 1913; *Prolegomena to History: the Relation of History to Literature, Philosophy, and Science*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1916 (University of California Publications in History, vol. 4, no. 3); *The Processes of History*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1918; "The Approach to the Study of Man," *Journal of Philosophy*, 16 (1919), pp. 151-156; "Anthropology and History," *Journal of Philosophy*, 16 (1919), pp. 691-696; "Geography As an Aid to Statecraft: an Appreciation of Mackinder's 'Democratic Ideals and Reality,'" *Geographical Review*, 8 (1919), pp. 227-242; "Clio," *University of California Chronicle* (1922), pp. 347-360. In this discussion some use has been made of materials from these earlier writings, but the argument presented is new, and leads to conclusions which throw new light upon the relations of the studies commonly known as the 'social sciences.'

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

IN 1918 the British Labor Party pronounced its belief in the necessity for increased study, scientific investigation, and deliberate organization of research "in the still undeveloped science of society." "If law," it declared, "is the mother of freedom, science must be the parent of law." In 1795 a similar point of view was expressed by the National Convention of France, on the occasion of the foundation of the Institut National. So too, in the twentieth century, Bryce, Wells, Wallas, Gardner, Dewey, and many others, have reëchoed the judgments of Vico, Montesquieu, Turgot, Diderot, and Condorcet, of David Hume, Adam Smith, and Jeremy Bentham, in the eighteenth century, in urging the importance of a scientific study of 'man' or of 'society.'

Notwithstanding the aspirations of two centuries, there is apparent, at the present moment, a widespread unrest and dissatisfaction with the character of the studies spoken of familiarly as the 'social sciences.' The evidence of this intellectual disquiet appears, not only in outspoken criticisms of current activities in the study of society, but in repeated attempts to define anew the relationships of the various disciplines in which the phenomena of human existence are made the object of inquiry, as well as in persistent efforts to improve and strengthen each separate discipline by means of a critical examination and reformulation of its particular problems and modes of procedure.

There can be no question that a strong determination manifests itself at the present time to find a sound basis for the study of 'man' or of 'society,' and this is a most hopeful sign. Yet it must be confessed that the discussions in which the present situation finds expression have led to little more than the elaboration of logical arguments drawn from the obvious distinguishing features of the activities pursued in the recognized branches of humanistic study. It is remark-

able, indeed, that the fact should not have impressed itself more generally on the minds of contemporary scholars that when established modes of procedure have brought to the surface irreconcilable views as to method and aim of inquiry in any field, the time has come for a far-reaching inquiry into the theoretical foundations of the subject in question.

Instead, therefore, of attempting to mitigate our present discontents by seeking to arrive, by mutual agreement, at a demarcation of existing studies, it would seem imperative that we should endeavor to understand the conditions in thought which have given rise to the present symptoms of disquiet and unrest. If this course be pursued, the fact cannot well be ignored that, in one vital aspect, the discussion in regard to the 'social sciences' has taken its rise (in the United States), not in the universities, but in the schools. In recent years there has been a well-defined movement directed toward the introduction of 'social studies' into the curriculum of the high school. As this movement has progressed, it has become apparent that time could not be found, in the school programme, for each of the separate 'social science' disciplines represented in the university. Hence the question has arisen as to how the essentials or foundations of the higher studies could be presented in elementary form. What the schools have asked, in principle, is a definition of the common ground from which the special branches of the 'social sciences' have become differentiated. In thus endeavoring to reach back to the 'simple' form, to the logical beginnings of the 'social sciences,' the schools have raised questions of the most fundamental description, questions which cannot be answered without consideration of the conceptual basis upon which these inquiries rest.

The difficulty of the situation which has thus been precipitated lies in the fact that the university studies which are grouped under the head of 'social sciences' recognize no common basis in theory or in method. Even a cursory examination of the aims and ideals of the 'social sciences' will

reveal the fact that, while extramural humanists have been urging the need of a 'science of society,' the academic exponents of history, economics, anthropology, and sociology have been insisting that the work of each of these branches was in the strictest sense 'scientific.' Under these conditions, the prospect of arriving at a solution of the difficulties which have presented themselves would be encouraging, provided that the representatives of each of these subjects were in agreement as to the signification of the term 'science.' Inquiry, however, discloses the anomalous complication that while each branch of the 'social sciences' lays claim to the distinction of being 'scientific,' each one follows what, to all appearance, is a distinct and independent 'method.' We are driven, therefore, to the conclusion that it is hopeless to continue the discussion of the relationship of the different 'social sciences' until light has been thrown upon the differences in modes of procedure which characterize the existing studies concerned with the investigation of the activities of men.

The only systematic effort to elucidate the complex situation in regard to method which exists in the field of the humanities has been made by a group of philosophers in Germany. The essential feature of this effort has been the acceptance, as given, of the existing differences in 'method'; the procedure followed has been to set up, at whatever pains, arguments of a logical order to justify the established usages. The 'method' employed in any subject, it is held, is determined by the particular object which the student has in view, so that, to these logicians, there is nothing incongruous in the notion of there being as many types of 'scientific method' as there are 'scientific' investigators. Whatever the validity of this contention, it will be evident that this effort can contribute nothing to the elucidation of the present complexity in the methodology of the 'social sciences.'

The problem with which we are confronted is set, then, by the fact that while publicists urge the need of a science of

society in the name of the general welfare, and while teachers urge the need of instruction in the elements of 'social science' in the interest of the intelligence of the people, the higher learning of the universities, in response to these demands, offers only a series of uncoördinated opinions as to the relationship of certain academic subjects, each of which pursues particular and separatist aims, by the employment of exclusive modes of investigation. In attempting to face the problem thus presented, it must be recognized that the responsibility for the reëxamination and elucidation of the theoretical bases of the humanistic disciplines cannot be devolved, by the present generation of university scholars, upon its successors or upon the representatives of other types of inquiry. The view has long been expressed that the historian, for example, is not concerned with such problems as the relation of history to science and to philosophy, that his business is simply 'to teach history.' Unhappily, the circumstances in which we are now placed have barred this way of escape from the embarrassing necessity of taking stock of the presuppositions and theories which the present generation has taken over without criticism from its predecessors.

Assuming, therefore, that a science of man or of society is a desideratum, and accepting the fact that the persistent efforts to attain this end which have been made during the last two centuries have resulted in failure, it must be assumed either that a scientific study of society is impossible, or that the procedure followed in the conduct of these inquiries has been at fault. The point of view of the present book is that the want of success which has hitherto attended the effort to bring the phenomena of human existence within the purview of science has been due to the presence of definite obstacles, represented primarily by modes of procedure and methodological conceptions inherited from earlier stages of humanistic study.

It is argued, in the second part of the discussion, that the differences in aim and method which particularize the work

of the different 'social sciences' to-day are the result of the efforts put forward, two centuries ago, by 'philosophes,' physiocrats, and moral philosophers looking to the establishment of a Science of Man (as it was called) upon a strictly scientific basis, as 'scientific method' was then understood. In the eighteenth century, the present 'social sciences' existed as undifferentiated elements in the study of 'moral philosophy.' It was not until after the turmoil of the Revolutionary era that certain aspects of moral philosophy obtained recognition as independent subjects of inquiry and of university teaching, and that 'political economy,' 'sociology,' and 'anthropology' started upon their modern academic careers. It is of the highest importance to observe that this separation of interests involved no change in method. The economics of to-day goes back to Adam Smith and the physiocrats; the sociology of Auguste Comte and the anthropology of E. B. Tylor carry on eighteenth-century traditions. If this be the case, it follows that one of the obstacles which must be surmounted, before we may hope to arrive at a 'social science,' is the influence of eighteenth-century conceptions of science.

The way in which these conceptions continue to affect the intellectual interests of the twentieth century is strikingly illustrated in the relationship existing between history, on the one hand, and economics, sociology, and anthropology, on the other. When Windelband and Rickert discover to-day that history cannot become a 'natural science,' because it deals only with particular facts, they are simply bringing to light, by means of logical analysis, the conscious methodological assumptions on which history was excluded from the eighteenth-century 'science of man.' Due to the influence of the philosophy of Descartes, it was assumed that if moral or social science is to become 'scientific,' it must abstract from the particularity of historical events, just as physics abstracts from the particularity of physical occurrences. As a consequence, the social scientists of the eighteenth century

made it their aim to get away from the 'accidental' character of historical happenings, in order to discover the 'normal' or 'natural' course of change. Hence they set up that concept of 'hypothetical,' 'theoretical,' or 'ideal' history which has proved so effective a stumbling-block to the expositors of the work of Rousseau, Condorcet, and Comte. In short, the followers of Descartes introduced, into the very heart of humanistic study, a cleavage between history and the 'scientific' aspects of social inquiry which has not yet been repaired, and which remains to exert an obscure but all-pervading influence upon the humanistic scholarship of the present day.

It will be seen, then, that the eighteenth century, while it imposed its conceptions of scientific method upon the newer studies of economics, sociology, and anthropology, left history free to pursue its own course. Now, it may be taken for granted, despite the views of the men of the 'Enlightenment,' that there can be no 'science of man' which does not take into account the facts of human experience in the past. History deals specifically with these facts, unembarrassed by the Cartesian inheritance of its associates; hence the possibility lay before it of inaugurating a study of man which would be in the closest harmony with the scientific movement of recent times. It is of great interest, therefore, to note that the historians of the nineteenth century have persistently maintained that their work was in the strictest sense 'scientific.' This assertion, however, leads to a new difficulty, for the historical work of the last century gives no evidence of leading to a science of man or of society. If, then, the work of historians in the nineteenth century has actually been 'scientific' in character, and if this scientific work has not led to the establishment of a science of society, it must be admitted that the present situation of the 'social sciences' becomes one of great difficulty. It has, therefore, seemed necessary (in the first part of this discussion) to inquire

closely into the presuppositions and procedure of history, as represented currently in academic work.

The critical aspect of the present inquiry has its outcome in finding, first, that history, so far from being 'scientific,' has remained satisfied with its traditional function of constructing narratives of happenings in the past, and, second, that economics, sociology, and anthropology have maintained an unbroken adherence to conceptions of scientific method which are not in consonance with scientific procedure in more recent times. This conclusion renders it necessary that we should turn (in the third part) to consider whether it is possible to bring history, on the one hand, and the eighteenth-century group of studies, on the other, into such relation as will afford a basis for scientific investigation in the field of the humanities.

In this book the discussion is wholly theoretical. It may possibly be felt that any judgment in regard to the validity of the type of inquiry described, as an alternative to the types of inquiry now being pursued, must be reserved until such time as the author has ventured to show, by actual examples, how this mode of procedure actually 'works.' It must, however, be evident that the difficulties with which the 'social sciences' are struggling at the present time are difficulties in regard to the theoretical foundations upon which these studies rest. Hence, what we require, in advance of new constructions, is to lay bare the sources of these difficulties and to determine how we should go to work. It is maintained, therefore, that the present argument has a significance, in and for itself, apart from the results (exemplified tentatively in *The Processes of History*) which any one investigator may arrive at by following in the footsteps of Hume and Turgot.

PART I

THE STUDY OF EVENTS

CHAPTER 1

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE HISTORIAN

THE first, and most deeply rooted, of the obstacles which lie in the way of a scientific approach to the study of man consists in the traditional practice by which the utilization of the results of historical investigation has been restricted to the construction of historical narratives. Whatever the aim of the inquiry may be, historical investigation presupposes the employment of a critical technique. It is not, therefore, the improvement and refinement of critical procedure in dealing with documentary evidence that has continued to be an obstacle to the attainment of scientific results, but the notion that the proper aim of historical investigation is to provide materials for history-writing. The continued adherence to this idea has not only proved a bar to scientific inquiry, but has led the historian into maintaining contradictory positions in theory and in practice, and has involved him in problems of philosophy, æsthetics, and logic which are wholly removed from his sphere of interest and study.

The historian concerns himself, on the one hand, with documents, and, on the other, with happenings or events which have taken place in the past. Historical work involves, first, the critical examination of documentary sources of information, and, second, history-writing or historiography. The historian works with documents, and this activity consists in the application of criticism to the contents of written statements which have come down to us from earlier times. As a result of critical inquiry, statements are elicited from documentary materials, and these statements are the 'facts' of history. Out of these facts the historian composes narratives, with the object, as he sees it, of telling 'what it was that actually happened.'

This dual aspect has been characteristic of history from

the time of Herodotus down to the present. In the hands of the academic historian of to-day history retains all the distinguishing features which it acquired in the preacademic period. Even in the present generation history has made no break with the past. The modern academic historian does not assume that, under his guidance, history has changed its nature. He does not question that the narratives of earlier writers are 'history'; they are simply unacceptable as being judged uncritical or untrue.

Nevertheless it must be observed that the modern historian is of the opinion that his work represents both a new departure in the study of documents and a far-reaching improvement in historical writing. Up to 1850, it is affirmed, history was a branch of literature; since that time it has become a science.[1] Beginning with Grote, it is said, a reform was introduced, and this reform consisted in the elimination of literary ornaments and of statements without proof. As used by historians, however, the word 'scientific' signifies merely the

[1] C. V. Langlois & C. Seignobos, *Introduction to the Study of History*, tr. by G. G. Berry (New York, 1903), pp. 302, 310.

On the debate as to whether history is a 'science,' compare Carl Becker, "Detachment and the Writing of History," *Atlantic Monthly*, 106 (1910), p. 524: "If it is not science, it is nothing," with Elie Faure, *History of Art; Ancient Art*, tr. by Walter Pach (New York, 1921), p. xl: "The historian who calls himself a scientist simply utters a piece of folly." For other examples of this diversity of opinion, see: William Stubbs, *Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History* (Oxford, 1887), p. 85. Albert Sorel, *Nouveaux essais d'histoire et de critique* (Paris, 1898), p. 11. J. B. Bury, *An Inaugural Lecture* (Cambridge, 1903), p. 42. C. H. Firth, *A Plea for the Historical Teaching of History* (2d ed., Oxford, 1905), p. 8. Pasquale Villari, *Studies, Historical and Critical* (New York, 1907), p. 108. Camille Jullian, *Extraits des historiens français du xixe siècle* (6e éd., Paris, 1910), p. cxxviii. Gabriel Monod, "Histoire," in *De la méthode dans les sciences* (2e éd., Paris, 1910), pp. 371-372. G. Desdevises du Dezert & L. Bréhier, *Le travail historique* (Paris, 1913), pp. 5, 17. G. M. Trevelyan, *Clio, a Muse; and Other Essays* (London, 1913), p. 30. Viscount Haldane, *The Meaning of Truth in History* (London, 1914), p. 34. W. R. Thayer, "History—Quick or Dead?" *Atlantic Monthly*, 122 (1918), p. 638; "Fallacies in History," *American Historical Review*, 25 (1920), p. 181. J. T. Shotwell, *An Introduction to the History of History* (New York, 1922), pp. 8-9. J. W. Swain, "What is History?" *Journal of Philosophy*, 20 (1923), pp. 281, 348.

use of a critical technique, and applies only to the mode of procedure followed in the establishment of particular facts; it does not suggest research directed to the solution of scientific problems, or imply the adoption of the 'method of science' as understood in other fields of inquiry. It is unquestionable that the technique of historical investigation has been improved in recent generations, and that the technique of history-writing has been modified in deference to new standards of literary taste; but these improvements and modifications cannot be taken to represent any marked discontinuity with the practice of historians in the past.

What is of interest in the claims thus put forward by modern academic historians is that the attitude of superiority which they adopt toward their predecessors is a marked characteristic of historical writers in all generations. It may be said, in the words of Polybius, that each later historian "makes such a parade of minute accuracy, and inveighs so bitterly when refuting others, that people come to imagine that all other historians have been mere dreamers, and have spoken at random in describing the world; and that he is the only man who has made accurate investigations, and unravelled every history with intelligence."[2] The judgment that earlier accounts are untrue, or at best inaccurate, is common to historians in all periods. The remarks of Thucydides on Herodotus, of Polybius on Timæus, of Lucian on Ctesias, are typical of ancient historiography.[3] In modern times the same attitude has been maintained. Macaulay and Froude are the butt of every novice. Round calls Freeman 'a superseded fossil.' Arbois de Jubainville requires a volume to expose the faults of Fustel de Coulanges. "The modern French historian . . . reproaches Stubbs for his insularity, his simple faith in liberty, his conviction of the unique char-

[2] Polybius, *Histories,* tr. by E. S. Shuckburgh (London, 1889), xii, 26.

[3] Bernadotte Perrin, "The Ethics and Amenities of Greek Historiography," *American Journal of Philology,* 18 (1897), pp. 255-274. *Cf.* A. J. Toynbee, *Greek Historical Thought from Homer to the Age of Heraclius* (London, 1924), pp. 33, 41, 43, 48, 54, 66, 75, 206, 215, 220, 223, 229, 236, *etc.*

acter of the English constitution, and . . . for the invincible prejudice which made him unable to see the full value of French scholarship, and the true lessons of French medieval history."[4] So, in devoting themselves to the truthful statement of what has happened, ancient as well as modern historians have uniformly found the writings of their predecessors to be devoid of critical insight.

This conclusion is substantiated by a further consideration. With his attention fixed upon his own efforts, the academic historian of to-day dates the beginning of 'history' from the middle of the nineteenth century. Singularly enough, however, the investigator who has turned his attention to the examination of history-writing in almost any period before the present would have 'history' begin with the activities represented in the particular period to which he has devoted his inquiries. Gooch believes that "for the liberty of thought and expression, the insight into different ages and the judicial temper on which historical science depends, the world had to wait till the nineteenth century"[5] —the period of which he writes. Grant would have it that the writing of history, in the present meaning of the word, began in England in the eighteenth century.[6] Lord Acton thought that it was in the Renaissance, when the art of exposing falsehood dawned upon keen Italian minds, that history, in the modern sense, began to be understood.[7] Freeman regarded William of Malmesbury, in the twelfth century, as the first of critical historians.[8] Bury is of the opinion

[4] T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England,* vol. 1 (Manchester, 1920), pp. 7-8.

[5] G. P. Gooch, *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1913), p. 13. That the twentieth century has arrived at the point of criticising the nineteenth may be seen from the remarks of Henri Pirenne, "De l'influence allemande sur le mouvement historique contemporaine," *Scientia,* 34 (1923), p. 174.

[6] A. J. Grant, *English Historians* (London, 1906), p. xxiv.

[7] Lord Acton, *A Lecture on the Study of History* (London, 1896), p. 11.

[8] E. A. Freeman, *The History of the Norman Conquest of England,* vol. 5 (Oxford, 1876), p. 578.

that the Greeks originated history because they were the first to apply criticism to historical materials.[9]

In any age the activity of the historian arises from the perception that, judged by his standards, the histories previously written are unreliable and misinformed. The background of historical inquiry is, therefore, the existence of these earlier accounts, and, with implied reference to this background, the historian defines his purpose as being to set forth what it was that actually occurred. The decision to tell the truth as to what had occurred in the past was not arrived at for the first time in the nineteenth century. Ranke was not the first historian to make up his mind to tell 'exactly what happened.' In the sixth century B.C., Hecatæus, having before him, not the novels of Sir Walter Scott,[10] but the traditional stories of the Greeks, proceeded to revise what had been told and to state the truth as it appeared to him.[11] Generation after generation, historians have assumed the responsibility of setting forth "without prejudices, depravations, or sinister items" the record of the past.[12]

If we are to understand the insistence of each later generation upon its exclusive apprehension of the truth as to what had happened in former times, it will be necessary to observe that ancient and modern historians have been affected equally by an influence of which neither the one nor the other has been fully conscious. As Goethe remarked, "History must from time to time be rewritten, not because many new facts have been discovered, but because new aspects come into view, because the participant in the progress of

[9] J. B. Bury, *The Ancient Greek Historians* (New York, 1909), pp. 1-2. J. T. Shotwell, *An Introduction to the History of History* (New York, 1922), p. 6.

[10] On Ranke and Scott, *cf.* G. P. Gooch, as cited, p. 78.

[11] J. B. Bury, as cited, p. 13.

[12] Edmund Bolton, *Hypercritica* (1618?), in J. E. Spingarn, *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1908), p. 93. *Cf.* the statement of Polydore Vergil, quoted in Cardinal Gasquet, *Monastic Life in the Middle Ages* (London, 1922), p. 191.

an age is led to standpoints from which the past can be regarded and judged in a novel manner."[13] Every generation, Mark Pattison said, requires the facts to be recast in its own mould, and demands that history be rewritten from its own point of view. This is not because the facts are continually accumulating, because criticism is growing more rigid, or even because style varies. The reason is that ideas change, and that the whole mode and manner of looking at things alters in every age.[14] Hence it is that "most of the great historians whom our age has produced will, centuries hence, probably be more interesting as exhibiting special methods of research, special views on political, social, and literary progress, than as faithful and reliable chroniclers of events; and the objectivity on which some of them pride themselves will be looked upon not as freedom from but as unconsciousness on their part of the preconceived notions which have governed them."[15]

The characteristics of history have not changed since the beginnings of historiography among the Greeks. Historical inquiry is carried on at present, as formerly, for the purpose of providing the factual materials required in history-writing. It follows, therefore, that any critical examination of the activities of historians must concern itself primarily with the form in which the results of historical investigation are presented.

It is of some importance to observe that this is not the mode of approach adopted in modern 'introductions' to historical study. The common element in these methodological guides lies in the fact that the dominant interest of each and all is in describing the successive steps followed in the prepa-

[13] Quoted in J. T. Merz, *A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1896), p. 7.

[14] Mark Pattison, *Essays*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1874), p. 2. F. H. Bradley, *The Presuppositions of Critical History* (Oxford, 1874), p. 15. Sir Charles Oman, "The Modern Historian and His Difficulties," in his *The Unfortunate Colonel Despard, and Other Studies* (London, 1922), p. 210.

[15] J. T. Merz, as cited, p. 7. W. G. Sumner, *Folkways* (Boston, 1907), pp. 635-636.

ration of materials for the use of the historical writer; the major emphasis falls upon the description of the operations incidental to work with documents. In these technical manuals, then, the traditional procedure of historians is assumed, and the discussion of 'method' in history takes the form of a series of categorical statements as to what should be done in the technical preparation of a history, ignoring inquiry into the significance of what the historian actually does or what a history actually represents.

If, on the other hand, we are to comprehend the nature of 'history,' it will be necessary to forget for the moment the pronouncements of introductions to 'historical method.' It will be necessary to examine the relation in which historiography stands to the life of communities and nations, to consider the specific interest which has gained for it an abiding recognition in all cultured societies, and to determine the elements which characterize it as a permanent type of literature.

CHAPTER 2

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

HISTORY is the narrative statement of happenings in the past. No annalist, and no historian, attempts to set down all that has taken place. Not everything that has happened is known to the historian, however well informed. As Wace, in the twelfth century, remarked, "no person can know everything, or hear everything, or see everything." However near the event, any statement is incomplete, and of necessity varies with the opportunities of the narrator for observation and with his relation to the occurrences which he undertakes to describe.

Again, it is a point borne in upon us by the events of the last decade that history is concerned, not with the everyday life of individuals, but with happenings which affect the welfare of communities in a higher sense than the vicissitudes of men's private fortunes. Hence it is inevitable that histories should chronicle wars and ignore the routine existence of peoples. In the broadest view, everything that has occurred in the past is, or may be, material for history, but it is commonly appreciated that not all happenings within a country from day to day are of 'historical' importance. The subject-matter of history consists of occurrences which are unusual and out of the common, of events which for one reason or another compel the attention of men, and which are held worthy of being kept in remembrance.

Historical narrative, then, represents only a selection from what is known to have taken place. The contemporary historian does not include every detail which may have come to his knowledge, he presents only such matters as, from his point of view, are of importance. The modern historian, in turn, is limited in his selection to the restricted content of the original statements or other contemporary documents.

When we turn to consider what 'importance' means with reference to events, it becomes evident that this represents a complex and difficult problem, and one which occupies a prominent place in all modern discussions of the place and value of history as a form of knowledge. In considering this problem, it must be remembered that, as Descartes said, "even the most accurate of histories, if they do not exactly misrepresent or exaggerate the value of things in order to render them more worthy of being read, at least omit in them all the circumstances which are basest and least notable; and from this fact it follows that what is retained is not portrayed as it really is."[1] It must also be recognized that any judgment as to the importance of what has happened, in times recent or times remote, is relative to the time, place, position, and ideas of the writer. Every age has its own criteria for distinguishing between the usual and the unusual, and the conception of what is remarkable and worthy of record is a function of the whole body of ideas current in any generation. What the writer sets down is dictated, not merely by his private judgment, but by that of the community of which he forms a part. Furthermore, history is a long-established form of literature, and the selection of facts to be included in any history is influenced by the spirit and the conventions of traditional historiography.

History is the narrative statement of happenings which concern the fortunes and the existence of a particular people or nation. The inspiration of this narrative will, in the first place, be the fact of some crucial struggle. Consequently historic art, as Hirn says, "has everywhere reached its highest state of development amongst nations who have had to hold their own *vi et armis* against neighboring tribes, or in the midst of which antagonistic families have fought for supremacy."[2] "Most of the old German heroic poetry," Ker

[1] René Descartes, "Discourse on the Method" (1637), in his *Philosophical Works*, tr. by E. S. Haldane & G. R. T. Ross, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1911), pp. 84-85.

[2] Yrjö Hirn, *The Origins of Art* (London, 1900), p. 179.

remarks, "is clearly to be traced, as far as its subjects are concerned, to the most exciting periods in early German history, between the fourth and sixth centuries."[3] "Speaking broadly," Bernadotte Perrin observed, "it always required some great spectacular struggle—the Trojan war, the Persian wars, the Peloponnesian war, the duel between Sparta and Thebes, the Hellenic conquest of Asia—to elicit, as it were, a great historian."[4] In France the best historical writing of the medieval period was stimulated by the Crusades.[5] Similarly, in the fifteenth century, "it was the early success of the French war which gave the stimulus that was needed to produce the first-fruit of a national historical literature" in England;[6] while, not to multiply instances unnecessarily, it is a commonplace that European historiography in the nineteenth century was born of war. "Les grands historiens naissent pour les grands événements."[7]

The inspiration of history-writing accounts, in large measure, for the spirit in which it is written. This spirit may best be appreciated by a consideration of the earlier forms in which historical occurrences are described. Heroic poetry, for example, begins in descriptions of notable events. A perfect example of this type of narrative is the Old English poem on the battle of Maldon. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the incident to which the poem relates (A.D. 991): "This year was Ipswich plundered; and very soon afterwards was Alderman Britnoth slain at Maldon." The poem is epic in quality, and its tone may be caught from Professor Ker's translation of a fine passage:

[3] W. P. Ker, *Epic and Romance* (London, 1897), p. 24.

[4] Bernadotte Perrin, "History," in *Greek Literature, a Series of Lectures Delivered at Columbia University* (New York, 1912), p. 152.

[5] W. H. Schofield, *English Literature from the Norman Conquest to Chaucer* (New York, 1906), p. 125.

[6] C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1913), p. 8.

[7] Gabriel Hanotaux, "De l'histoire et des historiens," *Revue des deux mondes*, 6e pér., 17 (1913), p. 482.

Byrhtwold spoke and grasped his shield—he was an old companion—he shook his ashen spear, and taught courage to them that fought:—"Thought shall be the harder, heart the keener, mood shall be the more, as our might lessens. Here our prince lies low, they have hewn him to death! Grief and sorrow forever on the man that leaves this war-play! I am old of years, but hence I will not go; I think to lay me down by the side of my lord, by the side of the man I cherished."[8]

The speech is the poet's, but it embodies the spirit of the time and glories in the heroic deed, even though it ended in disaster, and prizes the virtues of loyalty to the chieftain and unflinching courage in the face of defeat. Heroic poetry owes its origin to contemporary compositions which glorify the hero's exploit immediately after the event. The chief object which the characters of the heroic age set before themselves was to 'win glory,' to have their fame celebrated for all time; and such glory was to be won by brave deeds.[9] "Let him who can," is the sentiment of *Beowulf*, "win for himself glory before he dies; that is the best thing which can come to a warrior in after times, when he is no more."

In the heroic age the deeds celebrated and the glory attained were alike personal, and the hero neither hesitated to boast of his own prowess nor to reward others for singing his praises.[10] "The great works of commemoration," Hirn says, "are all monuments of boasting. By the grandiloquent hieroglyphics on palaces and pyramids and by the extolling hymns that he orders to be sung in his praise, the exultant hero endeavors to win from future admirers a meed of praise which shall quench his unsatisfied thirst for glorification. Even in this case, therefore, history, in its psychological sense—that is, the concentration of attention upon times other than the present—has been born of pride. By relying on this emotionalistic interpretation," he proceeds, "we can

[8] W. P. Ker, as cited, p. 63.

[9] H. M. Chadwick, *The Heroic Age* (Cambridge, 1912), pp. 87, 88, 325 ff., 339.

[10] W. P. Ker, *The Dark Ages* (New York, 1904), p. 77.

explain the otherwise extraordinary development of commemorative art amongst tribes on relatively low stages of intellectual development. The same explanation also accounts for the artistic value of primitive records. The intensely emotional element of exultation, pride, and boasting that pervades so many of the commemorative poems and dramas makes this kind of history an art in the proper sense of the word."[11]

The relation of the historian's statement to the event which it describes is brought out strikingly by Sir Ian Hamilton: "When once the fight has been fairly lost or won," he says, "it is the tendency of all ranks to combine and recast the story of their achievement into a shape which shall satisfy the susceptibilities of national and regimental vainglory. It is then already too late for the painstaking historian to set to work. . . . On the actual day of battle naked truths may be picked up for the asking; by the following morning they have already begun to get into their uniforms."[12] It is evident, then, that historiography is not a colorless record, but is a rendering of what has happened in terms of the emotions awakened by the result.

The historian is confronted with a situation, the outcome or climax of unusual and important happenings which have deeply affected the welfare and fortunes of the group to which he belongs. The typical theme of the historian is the series of happenings which has led up to this situation.

When we come to consider the manner in which the historian deals with the theme he has taken up, we are reminded of the tragedies of the Athenian dramatists. In the construction of these tragedies the Greek poets drew upon histories or legends the outcome of which was predetermined and known to everyone. By consecrated usage the tragedians were restricted in their choice of subjects to a circle of stories

[11] Yrjö Hirn, as cited, p. 181.

[12] Sir Ian Hamilton, *A Staff Officer's Scrap-book during the Russo-Japanese War,* vol. 1 (5th impr., London, 1907), p. v.

the main outlines of which were already fixed. The details utilized in the telling of the story might vary, but the final issue was a thing given; and in drama the end necessarily dominates the structure of the whole. In Greek tragedy the end of the story was the dramatist's starting-point, and from this he worked back to a beginning. The invention of the author was concerned, not with displaying the consequences that would follow if a given character were placed in a certain initial situation, but with presenting such a character as would make the known outcome appear rational and inevitable, in terms of the highest possibilities of human nature as revealed in the stress of unwonted circumstances.

From the time of Herodotus to the present day, historians have devoted themselves to an undertaking which resembles closely that exemplified in Greek tragedy. They have described great and serious occurrences in the light of their outcome, and have sought to make the deeds of heroes and great men intelligible by the imaginative reconstruction of character. "It is in the realizing of grand character," Stubbs held, "that the strength of historical genius chiefly displays itself."[13] In this important particular, therefore, historiography is indistinguishable from imaginative literature. "The artist's power of thought is properly shown not in the direct enunciation of ideas but in mastery over motive."[14]

It must, however, be pointed out that the type of unity in historiography differs in an important particular from that of tragedy—more particularly since it has been said that tragedy succeeded epic.[15] In early heroic poetry the 'action' is simple, being concerned with the deeds of individual heroes. In the Homeric epic, however, the scope of the narrative has significantly widened. "The story and the deeds of those who pass across its wide canvas are linked with

[13] William Stubbs, *Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History* (Oxford, 1887), pp. 112-113.

[14] Theodore Watts-Dunton, "Poetry," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (9th ed.), vol. 19, p. 268.

[15] Aristotle, *Poetics*, iv, 10.

the larger movement of which the men themselves are but a part. The particular action rests upon forces outside itself. The hero is swept into the tide of events. The hairbreadth escapes, the surprises, the episodes, the marvelous incidents of epic story, only partly depend on the spontaneous energy of the hero."[16] The epic poem, in short, relates a great and complete action which attaches itself to the fortunes of a people, or to the destiny of mankind. Tragedy, on the other hand, represents the destiny of the individual man. In tragic drama it is but seldom that outward circumstances are entirely dominant over the forces of the human spirit. Obviously, then, tragedy, in succeeding to epic, does not carry over the notable outlook in which the fate of the individual appears subordinated to the fortunes of a group.

In the wonderful creative outburst that followed the Persian war, drama and history, springing from the same root in epic, so completely developed their special types of appeal that they appear to us, as to Polybius (ii, 56), to be widely opposed to each other. Tragedy, even at the beginning, assumed the point of view which takes the fate of the individual to be the essential interest in all drama. History, in a wholly different spirit, laid emphasis upon the fate of the nation or the group. The dramatist displays the individual struggling in the self-woven toils of destiny; the historian presents the common fortunes of the group as affected by the motives and passions of specific persons. It is not the fate of individuals with which history is concerned, but the fate of nations. Yet, inasmuch as the group is only to be seen in the named individuals who represent it, there is an instant tendency on the part of historians to follow the traditions of drama. The tendency is obvious in classical historiography owing to the convention, inherited from epic poetry, that permitted the introduction of speeches; but the admiration of modern scholars for Thucydides (in whom the dra-

[16] S. H. Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art* (3d ed., London, 1902), p. 353.

matic attitude was pronounced), the persistent emphasis on 'character drawing,' and the far-reaching attraction of historical romance, show the danger in which the art of Herodotus ever stands from the rival art of Aeschylus and Sophocles.

Usage in language makes a clear distinction between the terms 'annals' and 'history.' By 'annals' is meant a record or register of events taken just as they come in the order of time, and hence including in juxtaposition matters separate and disconnected in themselves. In 'history,' on the other hand, there must be unity and logical coherence of the parts. History displays an 'action' (in the dramatic sense) with a beginning, middle, and end. Annals are not history, precisely because they lack unity, coherence, and internal development. In historiography, as in tragedy, the first consideration is the 'action,' and the problem confronting every historian is how to bring the heterogeneous materials at his disposal within the compass of a unity.

The characteristic 'action' in historiography presents the issue of a crucial struggle between different groups, societies, or nations. This distinctive interest appears fully developed, at the beginning of prose historiography, in Herodotus. In its first form, the work of the 'Father of History' consisted merely of the story of the Persian invasion, now comprised in the last three books.[17] The author thus began with the narrative of a single war which was to him recent history. This was a story, simple in action, conceived in the old heroic spirit, of a victory won against overwhelming odds. The account was one that redounded to the glory of Athens and flattered Athenian pride. Herodotus represented the Athenians as "truly the saviors of Greece"; but he did more: he gave currency and authority to a story which embodied Athenian tradition and justified Athenian empire. "If the

[17] Herodotus, IV-VI, ed. by R. W. Macan, vol. 1 (London, 1895), p. xcii.

story is true," Bury remarks, "that the Athenians bestowed on him ten talents in recognition of the merits of his work, it was a small remuneration for the service he rendered to the renown of their city."[18]

At some point later in his career, Herodotus came to have a new vision of the war, seeing in it the culmination of different converging series of events; it is in this later form that his history has won the undying admiration of men. It is this wide outlook that constitutes the work of Herodotus a masterpiece of historical writing and gives unity to the whole narrative.[19] The view which he takes of the movement of events is inseparable from the emotion in the light of which it is beheld. Whether the Persians retired unbeaten, having effected their object, or whether the honor of their repulse should be accorded to the arms of Sparta, is, in this connection, immaterial; what matters is that Athens was remade, intellectually reborn, as a result of the war. The first form of the work may well be set down as the expression of a pardonable vainglory; the enlargement, on the other hand, reflects not merely pride in achievement, but, what is of the highest significance, the ambition born of victory (the inspiration of which, for the moment, made all things seem possible), the dream that led Athens to defeat and Alexander to conquest.

The work of Herodotus is of the type of history that narrates the details of a recent event, with a prefatory account of the circumstances that led up to it. In such works the focus is the *dénouement* as it appears to the author; the unity is inspired by the outcome. Furthermore, it is characteristic of this type that in proportion as the event is felt to be decisive will there be a marked tendency to look upon the present outcome as determining the future. Of this type

[18] J. B. Bury, *The Ancient Greek Historians* (New York, 1909), pp. 62, 65.

[19] Henri Ouvré, *Les formes littéraires de la pensée grecque* (Paris, 1900), pp. 307-308.

Polybius, especially in view of his self-conscious explanation, is another interesting example:

> Now in times preceding this period [he says], the events of the world's history may be said to have happened in a state of isolation, because each action, both in its inception and in its development, was disconnected with all others by time or place. But from this period we find that the history has become an organic whole, and the affairs of Italy and Lybia are bound up with those of Asia and Greece, and the general current of events sets to one fixed point. The distinctive feature of our work [he goes on to say] corresponds with the marvellous characteristic of our times; for as Fortune has swayed almost all the affairs of the world to one centre, and compelled every force to set in one and the same direction, so we would by means of our History bring under a common view, for the benefit of our readers, the operations which Fortune has employed for the completion of a combined system of the world. Indeed it was this above all that incited and urged us to attempt the writing of history.[20]

The theme of Roman conquest unified the work of Polybius; at the same time the far-reaching success of the Republic led him to look toward the future, for, he remarks (iii, 4), "it seemed agreed and forced on the conviction of all men, that all that remained to the world is to submit to the Romans, and to perform whatever they shall enjoin."

The extension of the power of Rome had a further influence on historiography, since it may be said to have forced upon men a second type of history, namely, that in which the past of a single nation is seen as a self-contained whole. This type, of which the great example in classical antiquity is the work of Livy, and which to us, owing to its cultivation in the nineteenth century, may seem even the natural and proper form of history-writing, was not only late in emerging, but, even after its appearance, suffered a long eclipse in the Middle Ages.

In Herodotus everything leads up to the crisis of the Per-

[20] Polybius, i, 3-4, tr. in J. L. Strachan-Davidson, "Polybius," in *Hellenica, a Collection of Essays,* ed. by Evelyn Abbott (London, 1880), pp. 408-409.

sian invasion, and the happenings antecedent to this event fall within the 'action' of the drama he presents, setting, as it were, the characters upon the stage and introducing the 'complication.' In Livy the stimulus is also a crisis in the affairs of a people, but of a different kind. The author is not stirred to write by the outcome of a single war, nor is there a dramatic climax in his presentation. The crisis is, one may say, 'unresolved'; it is present to the minds of Livy and his auditors rather than depicted in his work. Livy's view is concentrated upon the internal history of the Roman people; he looks back from the height to which a long series of achievements has brought the Roman people, and sees at every step victory won by Roman piety, constancy, and discipline. The spirit in which he writes is not, however, that of exultation in victory, even though his theme is the ever increasing glory of Rome; it is pride, certainly, but the pride of assured position, of conscious superiority. His pride is also of a contemplative sort: a mingling of regret for the noble virtues of an earlier generation, of distrust in the present, and—far from an ambitious daring—an actual foreboding of the future.

It is apparent, then, that history, viewed in retrospect, is not a merely judicial statement of what has taken place in the past. The selection of materials by the historian and the mode in which he presents his theme are determined by the conscious or unconscious desire to glorify the actions of the group to which he belongs, and of which, for the moment, he is the spokesman. Histories proceed out of the life of nations, and reflect the emotions consequent upon the outcome of events.

In the modern period history has not changed its nature. Concurrently with the rise of the spirit of nationality during the last century, historiography became self-conscious of its function as the literary expression of the consciousness of national existence. "Only through history," Schopenhauer said in 1818, "does a nation become completely con-

scious of itself."[21] Indeed, the potency of the type of statement which we call 'history' for inducing unity of sentiment and action is one of the notable discoveries of the nineteenth century.[22] History provides a body of ideas which serves to unify the attitude of the individuals of a nation toward their common country; the feeling of nationality is due primarily to a common pride in past events. "Le véritable patriotisme n'est pas l'amour du sol, c'est l'amour du passé, c'est le respect pour les générations qui nous ont précédés."[23] Everyone is familiar with the part played by historical writings in arousing the dormant spirit of nationality during the last century. In the hands of the masters of historiography, history has stirred peoples great and small to self-assertion and to action.[24] During the last hundred years we have had in every country a guild of professional scholars devoted to creating and keeping alive national aspirations—and national antagonisms. In every land, to use the words of John Morley, the historian has been the hearth at which the soul of the country has been kept alive.[25] It is obvious, indeed, that "L'histoire travaille d'une manière secrète et sûre à la grandeur de la Patrie."[26] Not only has history-writing

[21] Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World As Will and Idea,* tr. by R. B. Haldane & J. Kemp, vol. 3 (London, 1886), p. 228.

[22] The discovery, as is well known, was that of Baron von Stein. See Sir J. R. Seeley, *Life and Times of Stein,* vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1878), p. 499. G. P. Gooch, *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1913), p. 65. G. S. Ford, *Stein and the Era of Reform in Prussia, 1807-1815* (Princeton, 1922), pp. 322-326.

[23] Fustel de Coulanges, *Questions historiques* (Paris, 1893), p. 6. *Cf.* Ernest Renan, "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation," in his *Discours et conférences* (Paris, 1887).

[24] Lord Acton, "Nationality" (1862), in his *History of Freedom, and Other Essays* (London, 1907), pp. 270-300. H. M. Stephens, "Modern Historians and Their Influence on Small Nationalities," *Contemporary Review,* 52 (1887), pp. 107-121; "Nationality and History," *American Historical Review,* 21 (1916), pp. 225-236.

[25] Viscount Morley, *Notes on Politics and History* (New York, 1914), p. 66.

[26] Gabriel Monod, "Introduction," *Revue historique,* 1 (1876), p. 38. *Cf.* Camille Jullian, "L'érudition allemande," in Gabriel Petit & Maurice Leudet, *Les Allemands et la science* (Paris, 1916), p. 230.

awakened peoples to a consciousness of nationality, it has prompted them to action by inciting hopes for the future. Success, as in the case of Athens, leads on ambition; and the historian, like Herodotus, justifies the forward policy. Through recounting or representing the exploits of earlier generations, Hirn says, the descendants acquire that healthy feeling of pride which is the most important factor of success in the struggle for national existence.[27]

Historical narrative is bound up with recollections of national achievement in the past, and with hopes and aspirations for national greatness in the future. As a form of literature, history has an exceptional and highly important place in the life of civilized peoples. On the other hand, it must be evident that this form of literature is at the opposite pole from the type of knowledge which we associate with the word 'science.'

[27] Yrjö Hirn, as cited, p. 179.

CHAPTER 3

THE AIMS OF THE ACADEMIC HISTORIAN

HAVING considered briefly the relation of history to national life, it is necessary to recur to the activities of the modern academic historian, more particularly in view of the reiterated assertion that his work is 'scientific.'

It has been stated above that the typical point of departure in historiography is a given situation (for example, the defeat of the Persians by the Greeks), and that, with this as a beginning, the historian proceeds to set forth what, in his judgment, have been the antecedent happenings and actions through which this situation has arisen. Now, in practice, the academic historian does not begin with a situation which calls for explanation, but with a document which calls for critical examination and analysis. His initial assumption is that 'the historian works with documents,'[1] and that, where these fail, his occupation comes to an end. With the adoption of this mode of approach, he conceives of his work as the determination, by inference from the documents, of what has happened in the past, and, subsequently, the setting down of his findings without reference to any predetermined idea or interest.

[1] C. V. Langlois & C. Seignobos, *Introduction to the Study of History*, tr. by G. G. Berry (New York, 1903), p. 17. This work (first published in 1898) has been used for illustrative purposes as being the most important 'introduction' available to students in the English language; in respect to the views cited, it is fully representative of opinion among historical scholars. Other introductions are: Ernst Bernheim, *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode* (Leipzig, 1889; 5. Aufl. 1908); Charles & Victor Mortet, *La science de l'histoire* (Paris, 1894); Charles Seignobos, *La méthode historique appliquée aux sciences sociales* (Paris, 1901); Ernst Bernheim, *Einleitung in die Geschichtswissenschaft* (Leipzig, 1905); Aloys Meister, ed., *Grundriss der Geschichtswissenschaft* (Leipzig, 1906 ff.); Gustav Wolff, *Einführung in das Studium der Neueren Geschichte* (Berlin, 1910); G. N. Desdevises du Dezert & Louis Bréhier, *Le travail historique* (Paris, 1913).

The 'facts' with which the historian deals are statements made by individuals in regard to the actions of other individuals. At all stages in his inquiry the historian is occupied with testimony of a character that would seldom or never be accepted in a court. He admits that any decision as to what actually happened must turn upon the existence of different statements made by individuals having independent knowledge of the happenings in question, but he also admits that for important periods of history this requirement cannot be met. The unsupported affirmations of one man concerning the actions and motives of an opponent would not be accepted in the ordinary affairs of life, yet historians all retain the habit of stating facts on the authority of Thucydides or of Caesar, and end by admitting any statement which does not happen to be contradicted by another accessible document.[2] Needless to say, even under the most advantageous conditions a large measure of uncertainty must attach to inquiries focussed upon the actions of men, reported by persons whose relation to the actions we can only surmise, described in language which does not permit us to reproduce the mental images which were present in the mind of the observer.[3]

Historical inquiry is concerned with statements about actions and occurrences. As evidence for the happenings to which they refer, these statements are incomplete and of doubtful validity. Moreover, for any time earlier than the most 'modern' history, the statements which have been preserved are mere fragmentary allusions to what has happened. The historian is dependent upon documents, and, in this dependence, he is at the mercy of accident and of changing modes of thought. Fortuitous conditions alone have brought to the shore of the present the flotsam which constitutes existing memorials of the past.[4] The activities of the

[2] Langlois & Seignobos, as cited, p. 197.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 221.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 203.

historical investigator in attempting to determine what it was that actually happened from the evidence of documents are thus restricted within narrow limits. He cannot observe ancient happenings for himself; he cannot arrive at any fuller information as to what occurred than is contained in the documents which have survived. The imperfections of the record cannot now be repaired; all that might have been known is not now ascertainable. Furthermore, since what men observe in any age is determined by current interests and ideas, it is evident that no record made in past times could possibly satisfy the needs of the thought of to-day.

Historical criticism yields only isolated 'facts.'[5] The academic historian pursues the activity of determining these facts "in the faith that a complete assemblage of the smallest facts of human history will tell in the end; the labour is performed for posterity."[6] The facts having been arrived at, it follows that something must be done with them; and, in point of fact, the academic historian, without further questioning, casts the results of his investigations in the mould of traditional historiography.[7]

With his acceptance of traditional modes of presentation or exposition, the historian finds himself in difficulties. He finds that the critical study of documents is one thing, the statement of the results of such inquiry another. Preoccupation with original documents brings with it a sense of security, a conviction that work based upon primary materials must necessarily be sound and enduring. Hence the academic historian holds to the belief that, having discovered the facts, all that remains to be done is to state what he has found without prejudice or bias. It is not to be wondered at that, having adopted this view, he should be nonplussed, and eventually irritated, when it is pointed out that the end of all this effort is the composition of a narrative marked by

[5] Langlois & Seignobos, as cited, p. 211.

[6] J. B. Bury, *An Inaugural Lecture* (Cambridge, 1903), p. 31.

[7] C. & V. Mortet, as cited, p. 60. G. N. Desdevises du Dezert & L. Bréhier, as cited, p. 8.

partisanship and emotion. On the other hand, in adopting narrative as the form for the statement of his results, the modern historian is simply maintaining the traditions of history-writing, and his dilemma arises from the inability to see that in following traditional historiography he cannot escape the inherent qualities and characteristics of this particular form of art.

The difficulties which have resulted from the adoption of traditional historiography as a type-form for the statement of the results of historical investigation come to light in every 'introduction to historical study.' It is said, for example, that "men whose information is all that could be desired, whose monographs intended for specialists are full of merit, show themselves capable, when they write for the public, of grave offences against scientific method [*i.e.*, the ideals of academic history]. . . . The reason is that these authors, when they address the public, wish to produce an effect upon it. Their desire to make a strong impression leads them to a certain relaxation of scientific rigour, and to the old rejected habits of ancient historiography. These men, scrupulous and minute as they are when they are engaged in establishing details, abandon themselves, in their exposition of general questions, to their natural impulses, like the common run of men. They take sides, they censure, they extol; they colour, they embellish; they allow themselves to be influenced by personal, patriotic, moral, or metaphysical considerations. And, over and above all this, they apply themselves, with their several degrees of talent, to the task of producing works of art."[8] What this defection from academic precepts means is that, in writing a sustained narrative, the academic historian follows the established precedents of historiography—it is the writer on 'historical method' who has failed to recognize the fundamental characteristics of historical narration.

[8] Langlois & Seignobos, as cited, p. 314.

The difficulties in which the historian finds himself are inseparable from the mode of procedure which he has adopted. In the first place, he begins with the study of a body of documents, and proceeds to the presentation of the results of his investigations in the form of an historical narrative. In the second place, he has taken over this form of statement without consideration of the source of inspiration and of the characteristics of history-writing. Third, in the effort to eliminate the emotional and æsthetic features of the older historiography, he has set up an ideal of detachment and impartiality which admittedly is applicable only to the detailed monographic studies addressed to other historical scholars.

Nevertheless the modern historian cannot avoid the necessity for making extended surveys of historical events, if only for the purposes of academic instruction. This activity he regards, not as the construction of a history, but as the making of a 'synthesis.' In one sense, there is reason for this differentiation. It has been pointed out that the preacademic historian began with a given situation, the outcome of crucial events in the life of a nation, and proceeded to explain this situation in terms of the sequence of events leading up to it. On the other hand, the academic historian sets out from a body of documents, and arrives at a group of isolated 'facts,' of which, naturally, he desires to make some use. We may see, then, that whereas the older historian was considering a present situation in the light of its antecedents, the academic historian considers a series of happenings in and for itself. The documents give only isolated particulars, which fall into a chronological order; the academic historian is obliged to invent for himself an 'action' into which as a framework he may dispose the uncoördinated elements provided by antecedent inquiry.[9] It is evident, then, that the modern historian has succeeded, in one aspect, in dissociat-

[9] Langlois & Seignobos, as cited, p. 224.

ing his work from historiography in its traditional form, but, in doing so, he has only increased his own difficulties.

To make a synthesis, to build up the separate elements, provided by investigation, into a connected narrative, requires that a series of events must be envisaged 'as a whole.' The 'whole' which the historian envisages is not a totality corresponding to all that has taken place; in the majority of cases, it is not even the sum of the particulars which have been ascertained. It is a selection from the available data so arranged as to convey to the reader, not the actual complexity of happenings, but such happenings as the historian considers of importance in a period or in a series of occurrences. The 'synthesis' of the modern historian is, then, as much a personal presentation of what has happened as the narrative of the earlier historian; the academic historian, no less than his predecessor, is engaged in the construction of a work of art.

We are now in a position to recognize the justice of Mr. Balfour's remark that, in the writing of history, "there is always an artist to be reckoned with. It may be Thucydides. It may be Dr. Dryasdust. . . . But there is always somebody; and though that somebody might repudiate the notion that his narrative was a work of art, yet he cannot evade responsibility for selection, for emphasis, and for colour. We may think him a bad artist, but, even in his own despite, an artist he is;—an artist whose material is not marble or stone, but brute fact."[10] "L'art seul et non la science peut finalement nous donner des images d'ensemble."[11]

Furthermore, when we perceive that the academic historian of to-day is simply the latest representative of the long line of historical writers which stretches back to Hecatæus and Herodotus, the significance of his efforts to tell the truth will be better appreciated. "What has in the main

[10] A. J. Balfour, *Theism and Humanism* (London, 1915), pp. 85-86.

[11] Harald Höffding, *La pensée humaine*, tr. par Jacques de Coussage (Paris, 1911), p. 293.

caused history to be written, and when written to be eagerly read, is neither its scientific value nor its practical utility, but its æsthetic interest. Men love to contemplate the performances of their fellows, and whatever enables them to do so, whether we belittle it as gossip or exalt it as history, will find admirers in abundance. . . . Directly it appears [however], that the governing preoccupation of an historian is to be picturesque, his narrative becomes intolerable. This is because the interest—I mean the æsthetic interest—of history largely depends upon its accuracy; or (more strictly) upon its supposed accuracy. . . . Fact has an interest, because it is fact; because it actually happened; because actual people who really lived and really suffered and really rejoiced caused it to happen, or were affected by its happening. And on this interest the charm of history essentially depends."[12] The documentary scholar is thus justified in his endeavors. Through his efforts assurance is given to the public that the statements embodied in the most recent history are really true. Without such assurance the emotion associated with historical literature would be inhibited by the presence of doubt. It is this assurance, on the other hand, which has made history the important instrument of propaganda which it has become.

The aim of the academic historian to state his results with 'impartiality' likewise finds its explanation in the æsthetic requirements of historiography. The experience of Edward Gibbon is a case in point. The reader of Gibbon's autobiographies will recollect that, from youth upward, he had "aspired to the character of an historian." Before deciding to write the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, he had spent years in search of a suitable subject. Thus he had been much occupied with the thought of writing upon some

[12] A. J. Balfour, as cited, pp. 82-83. *Cf.* G. M. Trevelyan, "History and Literature," *History*, n.s. 9 (1924), p. 91: "Truth is the criterion of historical study; but its impelling motive is poetic. Its poetry consists in its being true. There we find the synthesis of the scientific and literary views of history."

period of English history: Richard the First attracted him, as did the Wars of the Barons, the exploits of the Black Prince, and the lives of Sir Philip Sydney and Sir Walter Raleigh.[13] As his ideas matured, however, Gibbon eliminated the English subjects from consideration. In July, 1762, he wrote in his diary: "I am afraid of being reduced to drop my Hero [Raleigh]. . . . Could I even surmount these obstacles [which he has detailed], I should shrink with terror from the modern history of England, where every character is a problem, and every reader a friend or an enemy; where a writer is supposed to hoist a flag of party, and is devoted to damnation by the adverse faction." "I must," he concluded, "embrace a safer and more extensive theme." The history of the origin and establishment of the liberty of the Swiss next engaged his attention, Switzerland having become for him a second home. This 'glorious theme' proved so attractive that Gibbon actually wrote a 'first book,' which was badly received and so abandoned. He was conscious, he said, that he had not attained "the genuine style, the middle tone, of that species of writing."[14] So, after years of study and deliberation, he decided against writing the history of either of the countries to which he was emotionally attached. That is, Gibbon discovered that the characteristic interest or emotion of national history stood in the way of the production of a work of art: on the one hand, he could not achieve the 'middle tone,' and, on the other, his audience could not, in reading, overcome their political feelings. "It was at Rome," he stated, "on the fifteenth of October, 1764, that as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted fryars were singing Vespers in the temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the City first started to my mind."[15]

It is evident, then, that Gibbon's success as an historian

[13] *The Autobiographies of Edward Gibbon,* ed. by John Murray (2d ed., London, 1897), pp. 258-259; *cf.* pp. 193-197, 275-278, 301-302, 407-409.

[14] *Ibid.,* pp. 195-196, 276, 408.

[15] *Ibid.,* p. 302; *cf.* pp. 405-406.

was not due, as has frequently been suggested, to some fortunate accident which gave him a great subject, nor yet to the brilliance of his style or his accuracy of statement; it was due to the deliberation with which he approached the writing of history, and to the pains which he was at to rule out, as far as was humanly possible, every element of failure. His experience deserves the closest study from historical writers; here, however, one or two points only may be noticed. In the first place, it will be observed that Gibbon's initial attempts followed the mode of procedure of the modern academic historian; he considered certain episodes or movements in the past from the point of view of chronological order. His later effort was determined by his recognition of a present situation (barefooted friars in the temple of Jupiter), and, from this as a point of departure, he went back to a beginning and followed out the steps through which the present situation had come into existence. In this way he envisaged a complete 'action' of what may be described as the classical type.

Even more interesting, however, is Gibbon's recognition of the fact that an impartial attitude is impossible for the historian in dealing with a subject which enlists political sympathy or passion. When political questions are the subject of discussion, passion is inevitably aroused, and "every reader is a friend or an enemy." Loyalty to a cause may, indeed, be said even to forbid the inhibition, the restraint, of such feelings. What is felt to be misrepresentation of one's country stirs indignant protest, though the circumstances may be a century old and hidden in obscurity. As Mommsen said, "those who have lived through historical events . . . begin to see that history is neither written nor made without love or hate."[16] What Gibbon saw was that partisanship and patriotism are destructive of that exteriorized, 'distanced' view which is the very core of æsthetic presentation.

[16] Quoted in G. P. Gooch, *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1913), p. 458.

What the modern historian aims at in advocating 'impartiality' is identical with the 'genuine style, the middle tone,' which Gibbon strove so earnestly to attain. The demand for 'impartiality' is just the unconscious recognition of the need for 'distance' in history-writing.[17]

We may see, then, that the truthfulness, objectivity, and impartiality on which the academic historian bases his claim to a 'scientific' presentation of fact are, in themselves, simply requirements of historiographic art.

History is not the mere statement of 'what has actually happened.' The historian, whether he sets out to explain a given present in the light of its antecedents or to construct a synthesis of what has happened from the materials provided by documents, is engaged in making a construction which is conditioned by the records which have been preserved, by the ideas and interests of the present in which the historian lives, by the exigencies and requirements of a form of art. With whatever care the facts are sifted, with whatever sincerity they are subsequently presented, narrative statement remains art, and, as such, is not science. The ambition and desire of historians, in the last half-century, to achieve scientific results is only an additional evidence of the influence of the demand for scientific knowledge in regard to the affairs of men to which attention was called at the outset. This hope or desire of historians can, however, be realized only when they have come to appreciate that, in adopting the mode of presentation for their results which is characteristic of traditional historiography, they have cut themselves off from any possibility of the attainment of scientific results.

[17] See Edward Bullough, " 'Psychical Distance' As a Factor in Art and As an Æsthetic Principle," *British Journal of Psychology,* 5 (1912), pp. 87-118.

CHAPTER 4

NATIONAL HISTORY AND WORLD HISTORY

THE adherence of the modern historian to traditional historiography has had a wider influence, as an obstacle to the extension of the method of science to the study of man, than that of restricting the activities of historical scholars to the practice of the art of history-writing.

Up to the present, academic history has not succeeded in liberating itself from the influence of the Romantic period, during which, in every country of Europe, the spirit of nationality demanded the rewriting of history in terms of a new sense of national existence and a new enthusiasm for national achievements in the past. In all essentials it has remained unaffected by the scientific movement of the second half of the nineteenth century. When, from time to time, individuals influenced by this latter movement of thought have questioned the validity of history as an academic discipline, historians have defended their position with vigor and aggressiveness. They have asserted that their intentions were misunderstood,[1] that their work is 'scientific,' that their real aim is the determination of the 'truth,' and, in the last analysis, that history is identical with philosophy. Notwithstanding this defence, it must be urged that the adhesion of modern historians to old practice in historical composition has fostered the expression of patriotic emotions, and has awakened ambitions which have led to disastrous results in the modern world; it has limited the outlook of men by confining their view of the past within narrow particularist bounds; it has promoted the incorporation in histories of philosophies based upon superficial hypotheses and unten-

[1] J. H. Round, "Historical Research," *Nineteenth Century*, 44 (1898), p. 1005. G. L. Burr, "The Freedom of History," *American Historical Review*, 22 (1917), p. 265.

able analogies; it has led to the exploitation of history in the so-called 'idealistic reaction' against science; it has perpetuated naïve concepts of causation, and has effectually prevented the systematic study of the factors and processes which have influenced human activities and hence have affected in a high degree the welfare of men. It will now be necessary to consider some of these points in detail.

The scientific study of man must take into consideration the facts that are available in regard to mankind without limitation as to time or place. Academic history, on the other hand, finds its characteristic interest in national history.[2] In this the emotional appeal is strongest, the type of unity is simplest, and the linguistic difficulties inseparable from the use of documents are most readily overcome. At the same time nationalistic history fixes the attention of the investigator, no less than of the reader, upon one country, and so limits the possibility of any wide outlook upon the activities of other peoples. It creates an interest, indeed, which is inimical to a balanced judgment in regard to the movement of events, for, of necessity, it magnifies the rôle of each special unit in the conduct of affairs.

The particularist influence of academic history is evident from an examination of its relation to geographical areas. National history involves a restriction of attention to the affairs of some one land, great or small. History, as taught in the centers of western civilization, limits the areas which it includes within its scope to certain lands which have come to be regarded as being of special significance and importance. Academic history confines its view of the past to the geographical areas of the Mediterranean basin and of western Europe. The division of history, for teaching purposes, into 'ancient,' 'medieval,' and 'modern' obscures the fact that these terms have reference, not to the world at large, but to a relatively small part of the earth's surface.

[2] C. V. Langlois and C. Seignobos, *Introduction to the Study of History*, tr. by G. G. Berry (New York, 1903), p. 311.

Within the area selected for consideration, attention is further restricted to certain types of activity. The focus of interest is the dominant political authority of the country, and the principal matters dealt with are: the relations of the central government to other such governments; the maintenance and the succession of governmental power; the relations of the central government to special groups within the community. It is true that, from time to time, protests have been made against this narrowing of interest, but, despite questionings persistently renewed, the conventional limitation of history to political affairs maintains its prestige and its sway.

The restrictions imposed upon historical study and historical writing will be recognized at once if we consider any such phrase as the 'history of England.' Here, at first sight, the word 'England' appears to be a geographical term, and the inference would seem to follow that a work designated 'history of England' would concern itself with actions and events of every description which have taken place within this particular part of the British Isles. In reality, however, the word 'England,' in this connection, is the name of a politico-geographical unit, a state; and the subject-matter of a 'history of England' will be the affairs of the central government which, in the course of time, has succeeded in extending its influence over England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. For other phases of the activities of the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland we must look to other sources of information: histories of literature, philosophy, and science; histories of agriculture, industry, and commerce. The term 'political history of England' (which is occasionally used) would be at once more accurate and more desirable; and if the title 'history of English polity,' 'politics,' or 'government' were employed for conventional nationalistic histories, the relation in which these works stand to the histories of other activities of the English people would be apparent. With this differentiation, the 'history of England'

would not be taken as representing the totality or 'whole' of English achievement in the past.

Furthermore, to gain a knowledge of what has actually happened in the British Islands it would be necessary, not only to consider the activities of Englishmen which lie outside the operations of the central government, but to supplement the history of England with histories of Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and with histories of counties, cities, boroughs, and other local units. With any one of these lesser units as a focus, we may again have a series of specialized histories of intellectual and industrial activities.

Now, if we look at this descending series of histories, it will be apparent that the 'history of England' is not a synthesis created out of the materials of 'local' histories. The history of any national unit is something other than the sum of activities of the minor political units of which the nation may be said to be composed. It is a synthesis of happenings on another level, and with another interest or 'unity' than that of local histories. We are thus brought to see that any historical synthesis has reference to some particular geographical area, that ultimately there must be as many histories as there are geographical regions, and as many histories as there are groupings and interests in communities. It follows that every history is particular, for every history is a story unified by a specific interest in the mind of the historian.

The type of synthesis dominant in the nineteenth century is a product of the movement, in political discussion, which has concentrated attention upon the idea of the State. Nationalistic history and the Theory of the State are products of one and the same set of conditions. They are alike particularistic, and alike result in a narrowing of sympathy and of attention. The wealth of materials available for the study of the past of a country cannot be brought within the scope of any 'central government' synthesis. Nationalistic historiography can never do justice to the content of the past.

If the aim of history be to state 'what has actually happened,' there can be no escape from the conclusion that the final test of traditional historiography must lie in its ability to formulate a synthesis of the history of mankind.

What we are given in undertaking a consideration of 'world' history is a vast series of histories of localities, great and small, without any apparent focus or element of coordination. In dealing with the affairs of one country, the concept of the nation as constituting a political entity, placed in opposition to all other members of the same class, permits of a synthesis with a clearly defined interest or focus. On the other hand, it scarcely requires to be pointed out that there is no corresponding entity which includes all the political units and peoples of the world. In dealing with 'world' history, therefore, we are left in the predicament aptly described by Professor Bury: "To write the history of Greece," he says, "at almost any period without dissipating the interest is a task of immense difficulty, as any one knows who has tried, because there is no constant unity or fixed centre to which the actions and aims of the numerous states can be subordinated or related."[3] There is no unity in Greek history such as Polybius discovered in the history of the Mediterranean lands when Rome had once achieved an ascendency in the ancient world. There is no unity in Greek history such as has been given to that of the British Islands through the slow subjugation of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland by England, that is, by their aggregation under the English crown. The history of the world is an exaggerated case of the history of ancient Greece; the historian is left without a focus of the type which he has been accustomed to employ in nationalistic historiography.

Nevertheless the historian does attempt to write the history of man in conformity with the pattern of the history of a state or nation. He takes it for granted, apparently, that there are different levels of generality in history-writing,

[3] J. B. Bury, *The Ancient Greek Historians* (New York, 1909), p. 23.

and that world history stands in some such relation to national histories as that in which national history stands to local histories. But how is this envisagement of world history as a whole to be accomplished? How, for example, is the continuous history of China to be brought into relation with the history of Europe since the foundation of the city of Rome? In point of fact, the syntheses of 'world' history and 'national' history are not on the same footing. National history has unity of time sequence, unity of place, and unity of personality (*i.e.*, the nation). World history must deal with an assemblage of time sequences, of places, and of personalities. To bring these elements within the compass of a narrative, the historian is driven to assume a unitary time series, to shift, with every scene, from place to place, to substitute for the personality of the nation some general concept or 'philosophy of history.'

In world history the unity which the historian seeks to impose upon the facts is, in the first place, chronological. The inference is that since events take place in time, and since there is only one order or direction in time, therefore all events must fit into one time series. The presupposition of world history seems to be that the histories of all the different areas of the world, or at least what is essential or 'important' in those histories, may be brought within the compass of one chronological sequence. As we have seen, however, all histories have reference to specific areas. Time and activity are not extinguished in one area when happenings in another part of the world claim the interest and attention of the historian. Greece does not disappear from the earth when Rome becomes the center of the historical narrative. The assumption that all histories may be reduced to one history is, therefore, simply an expedient which the historian has adopted in the attempt to overcome the infinite particularity and multiplicity of events. In actuality, all histories are parallel in time and run concurrently. History is not unitary, but pluralistic. There is not one history of

man, but a vast series of histories of particular groups, which includes pictures of darkness and failure no less than pictures of 'success' and 'progress.'

With this irreconcilable diversity of interests before him, the historian, from the writer of the Book of Daniel down to the present, has assumed that at any given moment in the past some one power or state has occupied such a position of dominance in the world that it might be taken as the center of the narrative. World history thus becomes the account of the succession of empire. Hence the task of the historian would appear to consist in the identification of this succession of dominant or significant units, and in the narration of world events in terms of the 'national' history of each successive power as it comes into prominence. World history is thus a narrative of happenings selected from the incidents given in certain histories, the historian adding one episode after another as beads upon a string; the synthesis consists in the selection of situations from the history of one national unit after another. The order of succession of these different histories is well defined only in so far as the history of Rome occupies the central or critical point in the development of the story. The effort to construct a synthesis on these lines is directed by the concept of Rome as a world power; and we can scarcely avoid the conclusion that the assumption of one dominant state at each moment of the world's history is forced upon the historian by the absence of a 'world state' to give unity to the history of man.

The history of Rome may well be regarded as giving unity to European history; but this emphasis on the place of Rome in the history of the world merely brings out the fact that we write world history as Europeans, and from a strictly European standpoint. If the history of Rome is to occupy the center of the world-stage at the beginning of the Christian era, where are we to find a place for the Chinese empire under the Han dynasty? The European center for world history is even more unsatisfactory when we con-

sider the Middle Ages. Everyone is familiar with the story of the 'medieval siege of Europe,' which is depicted as a sustained defence of western lands against successive inundations of barbarians. Other views of the scene may, however, be taken; and this fact has been illustrated by a Mohammedan writer of the present day. In A.D. 712, says Ameer Ali, Mûsa crossed into France. "Standing on the Pyrenees, the dauntless Viceroy conceived the project of conquering the whole of Europe. . . . The cautious and hesitating policy of the Damascene Court lost the glorious opportunity, with the consequence that Europe remained enveloped in intellectual darkness for the next eight centuries."[4] Furthermore, it clarifies our ideas somewhat as to world history to observe that an historian, writing on the history of Asia, and referring to the invasion of Europe by the Mongols in the thirteenth century, remarks that, in this singular 'barbarian' invasion, the real barbarians were not the oriental invaders, but the Europeans who were attacked.[5]

We may see, then, that the world history which we write is not an account of the total activities of mankind, but a selection of these activities as affecting, and as observed by, the inhabitants of western Europe. Within the time series which we set up an artificial focus is introduced by writing the story in terms of the national history of one political unit after another. Any order which is introduced into the march of events is conditioned by the geographical standpoint of the author. With all our efforts to attain complete objectivity, we cannot divest ourselves of the outlook imposed upon us by life and education in a particular country.

The unity of any history is the creation of an artist, and is arrived at through the selection from given data or materials of such facts as are in harmony with the artist's conception or purpose. In attempting to deal with one thing of which there is no other instance, with a class of which

[4] Ameer Ali, *A Short History of the Saracens* (London, 1899), p. 111.
[5] Léon Cahun, *Introduction à l'histoire de l'Asie* (Paris, 1896), p. 355.

there is only one member (such as the universe, or world history), we encounter difficulty, even in the simplest effort to formulate a description of it. Sooner or later, we are forced into the position of saying that this one thing is like something else with which we are more familiar, and so we have recourse to analogy.

In national history, for example, what gives force and vitality to the narrative is the envisagement of the 'whole' in terms of the nation conceived as a living entity or personality. "Dans ces jours mémorables," Michelet said, "une grande lumière se fit, et j'aperçus la France."

In world history what we may speak of as the form of the sequence of events has been envisaged as a cycle, as a drama, and as a progress. The Greeks thought of history as an endless succession of identical cycles of events. In this view, the cosmical process consisted of exactly recurring cycles, in which the minutest occurrences were punctually repeated. We do not remember them—if we did, they would not be the same.[6] The establishment of Christianity gave to the world another vision of history, which represented it as a drama contained within the limits of Creation and the Day of Judgment, and divided into acts by the supernatural interventions recorded in sacred history. Since the 'Enlightenment' of the eighteenth century, the philosophy of history of Christian theology has been superseded, in great measure, by a succession of theories representing world history as the working out of some implicit principle or idea. Indeed, "all kinds of baseless and worthless speculations—even the merest dreams and vagaries—have been confidently presented as philosophy [of history]. The most unsubstantial and fantastic hypotheses which metaphysics or theology, analogy or imagination, could supply or suggest, have been pretentiously maintained to explain the course and meaning

[6] On the Greek theory of cycles, *cf.* J. B. Bury, *The Ancient Greek Historians* (New York, 1909), pp. 205, 248, 254; *The Idea of Progress* (London, 1920), pp. 10-13, 354. Theodor Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers,* vol. 1, tr. by Laurie Magnus (New York, 1901), p. 141.

of human development."[7] Philosophy of history, it has been said, consists in choosing among contemporary doctrines any striking idea whatever, and in making of this idea, or its negation, the pivot of an historical narrative.[8]

It will be apparent, then, that any attempt to formulate a concept of world history as a single series of events in time leads at once to a teleological explanation, and involves a judgment in regard to the future no less than in regard to the present and the past. Thus, concretely, Professor Bury views the whole sequence of history as an interminable procession, in the van of which all the epochs of the past are nothing more than a few of the front carriages. Modern history he represents as "the field in which we may hope to charm from human history [as a whole] the secret of its rational movement, . . . and win a glimpse of a fragment of the pattern on a carpet, of which probably much the greater part is still unwoven."[9] The picture varies from writer to writer, but perhaps the most widely adopted type has been that arrived at by instituting an analogy between the life cycle of the individual and the entire existence of humanity.[10] The most recent example of this mode of thought is not without interest. "The germ of Western society," says Arnold Toynbee, "first developed in the body of Greek society, like a child in the womb. The Roman Empire was the period of pregnancy during which the new life was sheltered and nurtured by the old. The 'Dark Age' was the crisis of birth, in which the child broke away from its parent and emerged as a separate, though naked and helpless, individual. The Middle Ages were the period of childhood, in which the new creature, though immature, found itself able to live and grow independently. The fourteenth and fifteenth

[7] Robert Flint, *Historical Philosophy in France* (New York, 1894), p. 18.

[8] Arbois de Jubainville, *Deux manières d'écrire l'histoire* (Paris, 1896), p. 5.

[9] J. B. Bury, "The Place of Modern History in the Perspective of Knowledge," *Congress of Arts and Science, St. Louis, 1904,* vol. 2 (Boston, 1906), p. 152.

[10] *Cf.* chap. 8.

centuries, with their marked characteristics of transition, may stand for puberty, and the centuries since the year 1500 for our prime."[11] What is to be observed, in all such attempts, is that the completion of the design, or the realization of the development, must be conceived as falling in a remote future.

The infinite variety of the theories advanced, in the effort to arrive at a basis for a synthesis of world history, leads to recognition of the fact that our concept of the 'whole' of history must proceed out of our own philosophy of life. Whatever the nature of these highly personalized philosophies, the essential matter is that, by his acceptance of the principle that such philosophies are necessary, the historian admits that the significance of the historical past is to be judged, not on the evidence of 'what has actually happened,' but, ultimately, on the basis of our personal speculations as to the future and destiny of the human race. This, it is to be understood, is the unavoidable result of the adoption of traditional historiography as the sole form for the statement of the results of historical investigation.

11 Arnold Toynbee, "History," in *The Legacy of Greece,* ed. by R. W. Livingstone (Oxford, 1922), p. 290.

CHAPTER 5

THE LOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

1.

THE academic historian has accepted traditional historiography without critical examination of its implications, and this acceptance has led him away from the activity which we speak of as 'science' into a world of speculation, designated 'philosophy of history,' which thus appears as the final aim of his endeavors. This, however, is not the only result of his adoption of the practices of earlier historical writers, for his acceptance has led him, further, into the midst of disputing philosophers, and has made him a party to debates with which, as a historian, he has no proper concern. The historian may, indeed, feel a sense of elation when he comes upon the statement, however justified, that "History is Philosophy and Philosophy History"; yet, supposing the statement to be true, he must be aware that the result so expressed is not the outcome of his own conscious efforts.

The interest of modern philosophy in history has its origin in the avowal of the historian that his aim is to formulate a synthesis, and to arrive at the 'meaning' or significance of the 'whole' of human history, by setting down 'what it was that actually happened.' With such an aim, it would really seem as if the idealist and the historian were engaged upon different phases of the same task. Each in his own way, apparently, is endeavoring to elicit from the world of phenomena the meaning or significance of things. The philosopher, after contemplation, arrives at a 'philosophy'; the historian sets out with a philosophy, and finds exemplification of it in the world of events. Logically, then, their activities would appear to be complementary and interdependent.

The mind of a thinking being is largely occupied in making constructions; impressions come to us, and we fit them into our own schemes of thought. Our constructions, conscious or unconscious, are framed for the purpose of setting up an intelligent conception of the world we live in; philosophy and science are the two methods available for the attainment of this object. The idealist may be said to look upon the universe as a work of art, and he adopts the view that the significance of any part depends upon the meaning of the whole. For him it is made up of details, but is not a mere aggregate; it is a whole or unity in which the details acquire a significance that does not attach to them taken separately. In a work of art, and in the universe as the idealist views it, the whole is something more than the sum of all its parts; and this conception finds expression in the doctrine that analysis always falsifies, because the parts of a complex whole are different, as contained in that whole, from what they would otherwise be.

In opposition to this conception, science maintains that any view of the whole must be in conformity with what is known of the parts, and so, putting off the entire question of 'meaning,' devotes its endeavors to the arduous undertaking of dissecting and sorting the objects of experience. In either case, it should be observed, the result arrived at is an hypothesis; but, whereas the hypotheses of science relate to strands or factors of which more than one example is to be found in the world, those of philosophy relate to a unique thing, the universe itself, so that verification by comparison is here impossible. It follows that, while the constructions of science may be tested by reference to objective actualities, those of philosophy can be criticised only in respect to their self-consistency in thought—philosophy, as Kant remarked, is constructed out of the resources of reason.

"The essence of philosophy," in the judgment of an idealist, "lies in the connected vision of the totality of things, maintaining in every point the subordination of every ele-

ment and factor as conditioned by the totality. It may be compared to the best theory of Impressionism. You may perfect your detail and finish as much as you please, but there is one inexorable condition. Lose subordination to the whole and all is lost. You must never violate the singleness of the impression."[1] Now it is with this eye of the impressionist that the idealist turns to survey history. He says, for example, that "a series of historical events is a true individual. A mere succession of events in time is by no means adequate to form an historical sequence; a thread of connection, a relating principle must run through all the particular events and give them a unity in the light of which alone the particular event can have any significance. History deals always with the progress or decadence of a unitary being which persists as an individual in spite of changes; it never deals with a collection of sequent but unrelated events. Unless this were the case, any fact would be of equal importance to the historian with every other fact; selection can take place only with reference to a universal."[2]

The historian is also an impressionist, and he expresses his aim in terms which have a close correspondence with those employed by the idealist. Thus a contemporary writer finds himself confronted with the problem of the relationship of history to the specialized histories of art, law, religion, and so forth. Is history merely a residuum left after these subjects have become independent studies, and is this residuum destined to be still further reduced by some secession of to-morrow? The answer given might have been drawn from any introduction to philosophy. The vital phenomena of human life cannot, Professor Robinson says, be exhausted by any number of monographs on special subjects. Man is more than the sum of his scientifically classifiable operations. The whole is something more than the sum of its parts;

[1] Bernard Bosanquet, "Science and Philosophy," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society,* n.s. 15 (1914-15), p. 13.

[2] G. H. Sabine, "Hume's Contribution to the Historical Method," *Philosophical Review,* 15 (1906), p. 17.

"these may be studied, each by itself, with advantage, but specialization would lead to the most absurd results if there were not some one to study the process as a whole, and that some one is the historian."[3] Obviously, then, the philosopher contemplates the 'universe' as a work of art; the historian creates a work of art out of the materials available for the study of the past; the philosopher assumes that the 'whole' which the historian presents corresponds with a 'whole' existent in events.

It is pertinent to ask, "In what does this whole consist?" The historian, as has been seen, is not informed as to all that has happened in the past; actually, his materials are fragmentary in the highest degree. In undertaking to grasp the 'whole,' he is forced to admit his lack of acquaintance with by far the greater part of the details necessary for such a purpose. He may, however, argue that, in order to recognize the design woven into a carpet, it is not necessary to examine every thread and fiber which has gone to its making. One might describe the pattern while remaining in ignorance of the style, type, source, or purpose of an oriental rug. A design is something more than, and is different from, the parts (materials) in which it is represented. The design, poorly or adequately, stands for an idea; and the 'whole' is this idea. But, we may well ask, what evidence is there for thinking that the course of events has a pattern, or that it represents an idea? Clearly this is an assumption. We are driven, then, to ask whence is derived the design which the historian seeks to identify. Professor Bury assumes that the design is inherent in the events; in practice, however, the design or idea takes form in the mind of the historian. As we have seen, the historian 'abstracts from' the available information in regard to the past to construct a 'whole'; in short, he imposes his own idea upon the facts with which he deals. The pattern which the historian reads into the facts

[3] J. H. Robinson, *The New History* (New York, 1912), pp. 65-68.

is his own creation; the 'whole' which he sets forth does not inhere in the happenings of time, but takes form in his imagination.

Academic historians insist that their aim is to get at the facts, to disclose, by means of documentary inquiry, what has actually happened. In this conception, truth in history means that the statements made by the historiographer have documentary support. On the other hand, facts are not 'true' in themselves, but in relation to some statement or proposition. It follows that, in history-writing, 'truth' is of the type that characterizes art, and is entirely removed from that which characterizes science. "What, then," asks Viscount Haldane, "is to be the standard of truth for the historian? The analogy of the artist who paints a portrait may prove not without significance for the answer to this question. The great artist does not put on canvas a simple reproduction of the appearance of his subject at a particular moment; that is the work of the photographer. Art, in the highest sense, has to disentangle the significance of the whole from its details and to reproduce it. The truth of art is a truth that must thus be born again of the artist's mind. No mere narration of details will give the whole that at once dominates these details and yet does not exist apart from them."[4] Research in itself, the same authority points out, can never arrive at truth in the field of history. "The knowledge of the historian is only partially derived from research." History founded on merely scientific methods would be a mockery.[5] The materials afforded by state papers and other historical documents must be used "by a man who possesses the gifts requisite for presenting the narrative as that of an organic whole, and that organic whole must in its expression be born afresh in his mind."[6] "Art alone can adequately

[4] Viscount Haldane, *The Meaning of Truth in History* (London, 1914), p. 7.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 32.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

make the idea of the whole shine forth in the particulars in which it is immanent."[7]

Whatever the reason for the correspondence between the point of view of the idealist and that of the historian, the nature of the effect upon the position of the latter is beyond question. This effect has been expressed, sympathetically, by Professor Bury. In supporting the thesis that "history is a science, no less and no more," he argues (correctly) that the philosophical interpretation of history is the only hypothesis on which the postulate of 'history for its own sake' can be justified as valid. "This principle of 'history for its own sake,'" he continues, "might be described as the motto or watchword of the great movement of historical research which has gone on increasing in volume and power since the beginning of the last century. But," he asks, "has this principle a theoretical justification? It seems to me," he says, "that our decision of this question must fall out according to the view we take of the relation of man's historical development to the whole of reality. We are brought face to face with a philosophical problem. Our apprehension of history and our reason for studying it must ultimately be determined by the view we entertain of the *moles et machina mundi* as a whole."[8] So, in bringing his discussion to a close, Bury says that "the answer to the question, 'What is the position of modern history in the domain of universal knowledge?' depends in the first instance on our view of the fundamental question at issue between idealism and naturalism."[9] Again, Windelband, adopting fully the point of view of the historian, finds that "the theory of knowledge of historical science must be sought in ethics," taking ethics as practical philosophy in its entirety. The ultimate problems of ethics, however, lead us back to the metaphysical

[7] Viscount Haldane, as cited, p. 22. *Cf.* David Morrison, "The Treatment of History by Philosophers," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society,* n.s. 14 (1914), p. 295.

[8] J. B. Bury, "The Place of Modern History," as cited, pp. 143-144.

[9] *Ibid.,* p. 152.

problems in which is discussed what meaning the temporal course of events has in relation to the timeless reality as the genuine being, only to discover, at the end, that no metaphysical theory helps us in regard to this fundamental antithesis of the temporal and timeless.[10]

So, by adopting without consideration the practice of traditional historiography, the academic historian obligates himself, as a preliminary to the writing of history, to a decision upon the most vexed and difficult problems of philosophical thought.

2.

It is necessary to point out that the modern philosopher occupies himself with criticism rather than with construction, and that he regards as his special activity the criticism of the methods as well as the analysis of the fundamental concepts and assumptions of the sciences. In other words, the scientist is intent upon his own enterprises; "the philosopher comes into being as one who is interested in observing what it is that the scientist is so intently doing."[11] Here, again, philosophy follows science; and it is of the utmost importance to observe, in the present connection, that, while it investigates methodology, philosophy does not devise methods for men of science to follow. As the sciences progress in actual insight, they must complete, improve, refine, and extend their methods;[12] the logician simply analyzes the methods employed by the sciences at a given time. As Rashdall says, "It is not the business of the logician to lay down rules for the guidance of scientific men. In so far as logic is concerned with the actual methods of particular sciences, the logician must rather analyse the methods actually employed in those sciences up to the present than to attempt

[10] Wilhelm Windelband, *An Introduction to Philosophy*, tr. by Joseph McCabe (London, 1921), pp. 279, 299.

[11] R. B. Perry, *The Approach to Philosophy* (London, 1905), p. 119.

[12] Wilhelm Windelband, in *Encyclopædia of the Philosophical Sciences*, tr. by B. E. Meyer, vol. 1 (London, 1913), p. 43.

to prescribe *a priori* the methods they must follow."[13] Logic does not justify, it describes method; it accepts the actual procedure of the sciences.

In the course of his examination of the procedure followed in different intellectual activities, the logician considers the nature of history. In this pursuit he has been much perturbed at the obvious differences between history and science. Until recently, philosophy has asserted that history is not science. The distinction goes back to Aristotle, who regarded science as knowledge of the universal, history as knowledge of the particular. The contrast is explicit in European thought since the Renaissance, but for long the opposition was maintained as between history and philosophy. Bacon and Hobbes thought that history is properly concerned with individuals circumscribed by time and place, whereas philosophy discards individuals and deals only with abstract notions. In the nineteenth century the argument shifts so as to bring the antithesis between history and science. Schopenhauer asserted that history is not a science because it deals with the particular and individual, whereas the sciences are systems of conceptions; and he insisted that, while the sciences speak of what always is, history knows only that which is once and then is no more. A more recent form of the contrast has been that the sciences deal with facts that recur, history with what has once happened and can never be reproduced. The antithesis has lent itself to a wealth of expression: Nature deals with the typical in the manifold, History separates the manifold from the typical; Nature is the realm of necessity, History is the realm of freedom; Natural Science systematizes and classifies, History individualizes and narrates; Natural Science deals with the abstract and conceptual, History with the actual and concrete.

In current discussion the antithesis is based by logicians on the views expressed by historians during the nineteenth

[13] Hastings Rashdall, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, n.s. 6 (1905-06), p. 1.

century, and, more specifically, on the formula of Ranke that the office of the historian is simply to state what it was that actually happened ("er will blos zeigen, wie es eigentlich gewesen").[14] While historians, heedless of the outcome, were occupying themselves in describing the succession of such particular events as could be detailed from available documents, logicians were observing their activities with the object of determining the principles of historical procedure. What the logician discovered was that 'history' is identical with 'historiography'; that it is the narrative of certain exceptional happenings particularized by names and dates, selected by an individual as of value or worth in relation to a given set of ideas. History, meaning 'the past,' is thus envisaged as an after-one-another procession of occurrences, each one emerging somehow from what has gone before, and every occurrence is regarded as individual and unrepeated. In support of this view, it is urged that in the world of everyday life, that is, in the concrete world of experience, in the world of action and of men, there is nothing but the actuality of deeds done that may not be undone, of words uttered that may not be recalled. Among the myriad possibilities of a given moment a single choice is made, and the entire future is dominated thereby; among the ways open but one is followed, and this way can never be retraced. In relation to this world of unrepeated fact, it is argued that 'history' stands out as the record of a unique series of events that has happened once for all. Accepting this point of view, the logician finds that 'history' with its statements of unique happenings differs from the sciences, which he describes as concerned with recurrent uniformities and with the discovery of 'laws.'

In considering this view of history, it must be pointed out that, while philosophy takes as its province the criticism of method in the sciences, this analysis has not remained disinterested. Indeed, in this discussion the idealist, carrying into

[14] L. von Ranke, *Sämmtliche Werke* (3. Aufl., Leipzig, 1877), v. 33, p. vii.

his philosophy all the importunity of life,[15] has come to regard science with hostility, and, curiously enough, to accept history as an ally. We cannot, therefore, adopt the views of logicians on these subjects without scrutiny.[16]

It is commonly stated by logicians that science is the more perfect the further removed it is from what is individual and concrete; that science dissects, and can never return to the actual object from which it set out. The instant, it is said, we attempt to explain reality by means of science that which is truly real will elude our grasp. Now the fact is that such statements have reference, not to the procedure of science, but to what the philosopher considers science to be. In direct opposition to this view, we may contend that science is interested in the data of experience in a much fuller sense than is the idealist.

The idealist accepts a landscape, and is interested in the 'value,' 'meaning,' or 'significance' of what he finds. Hence-

[15] R. B. Perry, *Present Philosophical Tendencies* (New York, 1912), p. 38.

[16] The more notable exponents of the ideas here referred to are: Wilhelm Dilthey, *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften* (Leipzig, 1883). Georg Simmel, *Die Probleme der Geschichtsphilosophie* (Leipzig, 1892; 3. Aufl., 1907). Wilhelm Windelband, *Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft* (Strassburg, 1894), in his *Präludien* (2. Aufl., Tübingen, 1903; 5. Aufl., 1915); *Einleitung in die Philosophie* (Tübingen, 1914), *An Introduction to Philosophy,* tr. by Joseph McCabe (London, [1921]). Heinrich Rickert, *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung* (Freiburg i.B., Tübingen, 1896-1902; 2. Aufl., Tübingen, 1913); *Kulturwissenschaft und Naturwissenschaft* (Freiburg i.B., 1899; 2. Aufl., Tübingen, 1910); "Geschichtsphilosophie," in Wilhelm Windelband, ed., *Die Philosophie im Beginn des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts,* 2. Bd. (Heidelberg, 1905), pp. 51-135. For a general presentation of the point of view in logic, see Ernst Troeltsch, "Historiography," in James Hastings, *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics,* vol. 6 (New York, 1914), pp. 716-723. For critical studies of Windelband and Rickert, see: Antonio Aliotta, *The Idealistic Reaction Against Science,* tr. by Agnes McCaskill (London, 1914), pp. 196-273. Ernst Troeltsch, "Über den Begriff einer historischen Dialektik. Windelband-Rickert und Hegel," *Historische Zeitschrift,* 119 (1919), pp. 373-426. Erich Becher, *Geisteswissenschaften und Naturwissenschaften* (München, 1921). The most recent discussion of the general problem appears in the symposium by R. G. Collingwood, A. E. Taylor, and F. C. S. Schiller on the question, "Are History and Science Different Kinds of Knowledge?" *Mind,* 31 (1922), pp. 442-466. *Cf.* also M. R. Cohen, "The Insurgence Against Reason," *Journal of Philosophy,* 22 (1925), pp. 120-123.

forth he considers the 'whole' which he has selected from or read into the concrete totality presented in experience. His way of looking at the landscape may be compared to "the best theory of impressionism." The scientist, on the other hand, does not accept what is given just as it presents itself. He is conscious that we look at an object, not with our eyes, but with our interests. He is aware that an infinity of detail lies behind any datum of experience, and he goes below or behind the surface as presented to examine into the way in which things work. So the geologist and the physiographer see the actual landscape with other eyes than does the artist; the physiologist and the physician have a fuller awareness of the human body than the most anxious mother. The scientist has occasion to know that the human eye has a very limited range of sight, and he endeavors to extend this range by the use of instruments; but he also extends the limits of human vision by pointing out that this contour is the result of the action of water in times past, that this groove in the rock is the result of ancient glacial action. Furthermore, in dealing with an evolution, the scientist does not merely recite history, he shows that the 'new' is the product of the working of natural processes in the course of time. The theory of Natural Selection may not be a correct description of the way in which the biologically 'new' emerges, but at least it gives a fuller content and more profound interest to the concrete facts of life in the world. At bottom, the difference between idealistic philosophy and history, on the one hand, and science, on the other, is the difference between æsthetic 'appreciation' and knowledge, between emotional realization of a scene or situation and painstaking investigation. The idealist, the artist, and the historian set out from the concrete, and arrive at some conception of a 'whole.' In doing this they leave behind them the totality of what is 'given' in all its fullness, and never return to it again. The scientist, on the other hand, is forced by the very nature of his inquiries to remain in immediate contact with the actual; his

every theory is tested by reference back to the concrete reality; and, furthermore, he looks out, daily and hourly, upon a world informed and enriched by the knowledge gained in his inquiries.[17]

It is neither desirable in this discussion, nor is it essential to the purpose in view, to inquire into the source of the antagonism between idealism and science. The idealist has taken history as an ally because he has discovered in it a form of knowledge, miscalled 'science,' which he may place in opposition to 'natural science.' This opposition has been so emphasized that it has become the central feature in the 'idealistic reaction' which "has tended to degrade science into a false form of knowledge and to find the true form in history."[18] The steps of the argument appear to be: the real is always individual and unique; history concerns itself only with the individual and unique; therefore history is the knowledge or 'science' of reality. It follows that "history, like philosophy, is the knowledge of the one real world," and, to be brief, that "history and philosophy are the same thing."[19]

The focal point in the discussion lies in the statement that 'history' deals with facts which are individual, rare, characteristic, exceptional, unique. Now, unquestionably, the totality of things and events is unique. So, too, every concrete experience in its totality is unique; it cannot be duplicated. On the other hand, historical narrative does not even pretend to describe the totality of what has happened; historiography utilizes only a selection from all that has actually occurred. What, then, is the relation of this selection to the sum total of actual events? In the argument of the logicians, the unique in history is defined by the statement of its opposite, namely, that which is common, constant, or

[17] *Cf.* Hugo Münsterberg, *Psychology and Life* (Boston, 1899), pp. 187-191. A. E. Taylor, *Elements of Metaphysics* (London, 1903), p. 55. Antonio Aliotta, as cited, p. 216. R. G. Collingwood, *Mind,* 31 (1922), pp. 447-448.

[18] R. G. Collingwood, as cited, p. 445.

[19] R. G. Collingwood, *Religion and Philosophy* (London, 1916), p. 51.

which repeats itself. The definition of the unique by its opposite assumes, obviously, that the historian separates the unique totality from which he sets out into two classes: the unique and the non-unique or common. He abstracts from the totality to get the unique. Abstraction, as everyone is aware, sets free some factor so that it may be used. In employing abstraction, the historian follows, in part, the procedure of the natural scientist; but, whereas the latter utilizes abstraction for the purpose of illuminating reality (the actual), and for the purpose of extending our knowledge of the world, the historian utilizes it, in the manner of the artist, for the purpose of constructing a synthesis, of creating a unique 'whole,' of producing a work of art.

The nature of the contention made by the logicians who insist that 'history' is the 'science' of the unique and the particular may be made clear by an illustration. If we write a narrative of the history of landholding in England, we select such facts as are of importance for the impression we desire to convey, let us say, the necessity or the injustice of 'enclosures.' This narrative will be a record of facts which appear to the historian to be individual and unique, and, it is maintained, will be a true history. If, on the other hand, we desire, as a preliminary step, to understand the problem of landholding in England, and, as a means to this end, compare the historical facts of landholding in different countries, examining the factors or elements which have affected landholding in a great variety of cases, this, according to the view expressed, will *not* be history. Yet it would appear to the uninitiated that the latter type of study would be essential if a history of landholding is to be written, and, more particularly, if we are to discover what was 'unique' in that history. However, if we accept the standpoint of the landscape artist, it will be recognized that what the particular scene before us has in common with other scenes is of less than no moment. What is of importance in such a case is the scene as it presents itself, with its own interest for the

painter, its own significance, its own meaning. The painter 'appreciates' the landscape, and depicts it in the light of his appreciation. In the judgment of the logician, the historian views the past as the painter views the landscape, and gives his personal rendering of what has happened in terms of its significance, meaning, and value.

The notion that history deals only with facts which are unique finds its fullest expression in the thought of certain logicians who regard it as the knowledge of the individual or particular, in contradistinction to the natural sciences, whose object, they say, is the discovery of 'laws.'

The word 'individual' comes to us charged with a wealth of significance, derived, in no small part, from personal associations. 'I myself am an individual' is, in general, our substitute for a definition of individuality. When we come to ask, "What is the principle that individuates the world? we are fain to conceal our uncertainty behind a mere repetition of the assertion that individuals are facts."[20] Royce's examination of the problem led him to the conclusion that the process of individualizing consists in setting up a class with one member and no more, and that this class is constructed with reference to an exclusive interest.[21] An individual is the object of an exclusive interest; conversely, any organizing interest leads to individualization. Thus the "unique individuals with which the historian works are not necessarily persons nor are they single events; they may be the life of a people, the evolution of European society, the evolution of world society, the evolution of the visible universe." Obviously an organizing interest, such as that represented here by the concept of 'evolution,' is required to give individuality or unity to the mass of detail which constitutes the life of a people or that of the visible universe. This interest, on the other hand, dominates the details which are included in the

[20] Josiah Royce, *The Conception of God* (New York, 1897), p. 220.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 264.

picture, and we reach the conclusion that the individuality of past events or facts emerges when these interest us because of their importance for a particular narrative composition. Whether a given historical fact is of value for historiography, we are told, depends upon its importance for a given synthesis.

It will be seen, then, that in accepting history as the 'science' of the 'individual' we have not progressed beyond the point of affirming that in order to construct a synthesis the historian must begin with some 'philosophy of history.' From whatever point we approach the consideration of traditional historiography, we find ourselves in the presence of the same set of problems. The historian sets out to create a 'whole,' and this 'whole' is of necessity the organization of a body of fact from the standpoint of some *a priori* interest.

When it is said that an 'individual' is simply the object of an exclusive interest, one may take exception on the ground that the definition fails to do justice to the feeling which attaches to 'individuality' as manifested in concrete instances. However the term may be defined, we feel that an 'individual' has personality; that what is individual has a worth, a value, in and for itself. In our everyday way of looking at things, we recognize an opposition between what is 'individual' and what is common and ordinary. When we say that a work of art has 'individuality,' we mean that it stands out, that it makes an enduring impression, that it is unforgettable. History is the memory of persons and situations which men will not surrender to oblivion. This interest of men in the unforgettable happenings of the past the modern logician has recognized as of the very essence of historiography. Not content, however, to accept history as a story worth telling because of its emotional appeal to human kind, the logician has faced the questions: By what standards does the historian judge of the events of the past? What is it we value when we select or single out something

from the past for record and preservation? In proposing these questions, the logician has rendered a service to history which it is difficult to overestimate. This service does not consist in any 'justification' of the historian's procedure, but in revealing the implications of that procedure by pressing home the inquiry into the bases of the historian's activity.

The problem of 'value' in historiography has been investigated by various logicians, notably by Heinrich Rickert. History, Rickert points out, does not conform to the method of science; it is a *Wissenschaft* of a particular kind and with a particular aim. The historian concerns himself with documentary inquiry, but he considers the facts elicited by investigation with the object of selecting data for a synthesis. In other words, the historian passes judgment upon the facts; he reaches a decision as to their intellectual, moral, and æsthetic worth. The importance of Rickert's work lies in the demonstration that these judgments of the historian are formulated in the light of "transcendental ideal standards of value." "The individual elements of history can be combined into a higher unity only by referring to a universal value. . . . If we would distinguish the essential from the non-essential in the world of experience, in a way which is universally valid, we must have a criterion of selection, an ideal norm which will enable us to eliminate everything which is not of importance to the attainment of that universal end, and to arrange the most important moments of historical development in a hierarchical scale of values, . . ."[22]

It does not concern the present argument to describe the characteristics of Rickert's system of transcendental idealism, with its curious postulate that nothing exists unless it is judged to do so, that facts are such only in so far as they are recognized. We are not concerned with the doctrine that the transcendent Ought is an object of knowledge, nor even with the 'philosophy of history' which regards the cosmic process

[22] Antonio Aliotta, as cited, p. 210.

as the progressive historic actualization of the ideal. What is germane in Rickert's philosophy is simply the proof it affords that traditional historiography requires for its 'justification' the recognition that its implicit judgments are of a transcendental character.

CHAPTER 6

THE CONCEPT OF CAUSE IN HISTORY-WRITING

THE philosophers who have undertaken to construct systems based upon the concept of 'history' as the knowledge of the ultimately real have assumed that the historian embodied in his narrative 'just what it was that actually happened.' The historian does not, as a matter of fact, simply state what it was that happened. It is his acknowledged endeavor to 'explain' events, to reveal 'causes,' and the typical procedure followed in this effort consists in the introduction, in the narrative, of speculations as to personal motives. "Motives," it has been said, "constitute the ultimate stuff of history."[1]

The initial suggestion of the idea which takes personal motive as the basis of historical 'causation' comes from the habit of regarding history as concerned exclusively with 'deeds' and 'events.' When something happens, somebody must be 'at the bottom of it,' and we begin to speculate on the motives which could have prompted some person to commit the deed in question. This procedure is followed by everyone in daily life, and by all historians in accounting for the actions of historical characters. It is of importance to notice that this exercise of the imagination is regarded by academic historians as the final test of competent scholarship. It may be well to present evidence on this point:

Of Bishop Stubbs it was said by an intimate: "His historical insight was such as to enable him not only to judge of men and of the course of events, but to make him capable of predicting with remarkable precision how a man would act in certain circumstances."[2] Stubbs himself wrote: "It is

[1] W. R. Thayer, "History—Quick or Dead?" *Atlantic Monthly,* 122 (1918), p. 638.

[2] W. H. Hutton, *William Stubbs, Bishop of Oxford* (London, 1906), p. 169.

almost a matter of necessity for the student of history to work out for himself some definite idea of the characters of the great men of the period he is employed upon. History cannot be well read as a chess problem, and the man who tries to read it so is not worthy to read it at all. Its scenes cannot be realized, its lessons cannot be learned, if the actors are looked upon merely as puppets."[3]

"The historian," Henry Nettleship said, "is not merely a lover of truth, not only a chronicler of events. These, indeed, he must be at his peril, but how much more! Insight into human nature—and this implies the rarest knowledge and finest sympathy of which man is capable; the power of tracing the delicate relation between deed and motive, and the pressure of action upon circumstance and circumstance upon action; knowledge of the world, in short, in the highest sense of that expression."[4]

Firth is of the opinion that a contemporary "who undertook to write a history of the seventeenth century could put together a pretty full account of what happened, but it must be necessarily rather superficial and general. He could not go below the surface and explain either the causes of events or the motives of the actors."[5]

We are moderns, but Dionysius of Halicarnassus wrote of Theopompus: "There remains his crowning and most characteristic quality, . . . the gift of seeing and stating in each case not only what is obvious to the multitude, but of examining even the hidden motives of actions and actors and the feelings of the soul (things not easily discerned by the crowd), and laying bare all the mysteries of seeming virtue and undiscovered vice. Indeed, I can well believe that the

[3] William Stubbs, *Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series,* ed. by Arthur Hassall (London, 1902), p. 89; *Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History* (Oxford, 1887), p. 85.

[4] Henry Nettleship, *Lectures and Essays,* 2d series, ed. by F. Haverfield (Oxford, 1895), p. 245.

[5] C. H. Firth, "The Development of the Study of Seventeenth-Century History," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 3d series, 7 (1913), pp. 28-29.

fabled examination, before the judges in the other world, of souls in Hades when separated from the body is of the same searching kind as that which is conducted by means of the writings of Theopompus."[6]

It seems unnecessary to point out the inherent weakness of any attempt to account for the actions of Alexanders and Attilas on the basis of speculations as to their motives. The ascription of motives, based on the psychology of daily life, is a dubious venture for one who professes to limit his statements to known and documented facts. Furthermore, unchecked as it is by any process of verification, the practice leads on to one still less in keeping with the claims of historical research and still further removed from the type of inquiry denominated 'science'—to ethical judgments upon the conduct of historical characters. So Lord Acton could say: "I exhort you never to debase the moral currency or to lower the standard of rectitude, but to try others by the final maxim that governs your own lives, and to suffer no man and no cause to escape the undying penalty which history has the power to inflict on wrong."[7] It may be well to point out that the masters of ethical theory are the first to utter warnings against the formulation of judgments such as this. "Histories," T. H. Green remarked, "no doubt, would be much shortened, and would be found much duller, if speculations about the motives (as distinct from the intentions) of the chief historical agents were omitted; nor shall we soon cease to criticise the actions of contemporaries on the strength of inferences from act to motive. But in all this we are on very uncertain ground. . . . It is wiser not to make guesses where we can do no more than guess, and to confine ourselves . . . to measuring the value of actions by

[6] *The Three Literary Letters of Dionysius,* tr. by W. R. Roberts (Cambridge, 1901), p. 125.

[7] Lord Acton, *A Lecture on the Study of History* (London, 1896), p. 63. On the utilization of history for moral teaching, see D. T. Starnes, "Purpose in the Writing of History," *Modern Philology,* 23 (1922-1923), pp. 281-300.

their effects without reference to the character of the agents."[8]

One of the great difficulties inherent in the study of causation in history lies in the fact that the materials with which the historian deals suggest in a singularly obvious fashion the primitive and original form of the concept of cause. As everyone knows, the idea of cause has been bound up with that of human volition; "our search for causes is ultimately derived from the search for means to the practical realisation of results in which we are interested."[9] The prime material of the concept is our consciousness of acting. 'Cause' is conceived as an activity which operates to produce an 'effect.' To the historian cause means the existence of will or activity on the part of some person or persons. Now historical investigation yields only isolated facts, and for the purposes of historiography these must be connected. The assumption is that the facts ascertained constitute a series between any two of whose members other series of inferred happenings may be interpolated. "The hidden motives, desires, and energies which underlie or accompany the external events require to be somehow connected, to present themselves in some order and continuity, before we are able to grasp and record them."[10] Obviously, what is here implied is the primitive idea of 'cause' as a direct personal agency.

In constructing a narrative, every event is 'explained' in terms of some particular antecedent or antecedents, given or imagined. The character of this antecedent is worthy of attention. In the concept of cause as fully developed[11] there are three terms: the antecedent, an intervening process to be determined by investigation, the consequent. In history

[8] T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics,* ed. by A. C. Bradley (Oxford, 1883), pp. 318-319. *Cf.* C. D. Burns, "History and Philosophy," *Monist,* 32 (1922), p. 363.

[9] A. E. Taylor, *Elements of Metaphysics* (London, 1903), pp. 168-169.

[10] J. T. Merz, *A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century,* vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1896), p. 1.

[11] Théodule Ribot, *The Evolution of General Ideas,* tr. by F. A. Welby (Chicago, 1899), p. 180.

there are also three terms: the antecedent event, an inferred series of (psychic) happenings, the consequent. The difference between the two series lies in the nature of the middle term—the historian arrives at his causal explanation, not by scientific investigation, but simply by adding imaginatively to the number of terms in the chronological series. Since it would appear that the intercalations are regarded by the historian as true in the same sense as are the facts which he records on the basis of documentary evidence, it is to be inferred that, in his judgment, there is no distinction between the factual and the imaginative terms in the series. What 'cause and effect' actually implies in history is the relation of 'before and after.' It follows necessarily that causation, as it appears to the historian, is not distinguishable from order in time.[12]

There is still another aspect of the historian's idea of cause to which reference may be made. In a wider extension, 'cause' means the ordering of events by divine will or purpose. The Greeks conceived of this divine ordering as being in accordance with established custom. An earlier type of thought regained influence, however, with the introduction of Christianity, which admitted the belief that direct interventions of Providence were attested by extraordinary or unusual happenings. One of the significant developments in historiography during the last century has been the extrusion of the miraculous in the explanation of events, an achievement which is referred to in modern discussion as the establishment of the principle of 'continuity' in history. The elimination of supernatural interventions from the chain of historical causation, and the establishment of the idea of 'continuity,' has not, however, been followed by the adoption of scientific modes of inquiry. The reason for this neglect is to be found in the traditional effort of the historian to view history as a 'whole' or unity, and hence as constituting

[12] J. S. Mill, *A System of Logic,* bk. 3, ch. 24.

a unitary 'causal development,' a single 'causal process."[13] So, when the practice of the academic historian is examined with reference to the conception of 'cause' which is implied in it, the dominating influence of teleology and idealism becomes apparent. "Only when facts and events cease to be unconnected, when they appear to us linked together according to some design and purpose, leading us back to some originating cause or forward to some destined end, can we speak of history in the sense which the word has acquired in modern language."[14] If we regard history as constituting a 'whole,' the 'cause' looked for will be the design or purpose which gives determinate form to this unity. Once more, then, the historian, by his adoption of traditional historiography, is led beyond the domain of fact into the realm of unverifiable speculation. Professor Bury's idea of the history of man "as a causal process which contains within itself the explanation of the development of man from his primitive state to the point which he has reached"[15] means simply the acceptance of an idealistic interpretation of history. It means that the 'cause' is some principle immanent or inherent in the whole course of events—the Absolute unfolding itself through the dialectic process. The search for such a 'cause' lies within the province of the philosopher, not within that of the historian.

It may be well to state categorically that the writer is far from seeking to argue that traditional historiography is something to be discountenanced and rejected by thoughtful men. History is one of the great forms of literature, and represents a valid interest of the human spirit. It is not the purpose of this inquiry either to attack or to defend the art of writing history, but to show that, in accepting this traditional form of statement as the end and aim of his activities,

[13] J. B. Bury, "Darwinism and History," in A. C. Seward, ed., *Darwinism and Modern Science* (Cambridge, 1909), p. 531.
[14] J. T. Merz, as cited, p. 1.
[15] J. B. Bury, as cited, p. 531.

the modern 'scientific' historian has placed a most serious obstacle in the way of the development of a scientific study of man or of society.

As we have seen, the academic historian works with documents, and, where these fail, his occupation comes to an end. At the second step, the historian presents the results of his inquiries in the form of narrative. In this he proposes to tell only what it was that actually happened. Historical narrative, however, is not photography; it is not a literal transcript of events. The historian, in point of fact, does not confine himself to the statement of what he finds in the documents; he is not merely an annalist. To the data derived from documentary investigation he adds his own conception of the facts (represented by the selection he makes from what the documents supply), his inferences as to the motives of the characters in the drama, his philosophy of history and of life.

The modern historian did not invent narrative or historiography. He found this form of literature in possession of the field, and accepted it without hesitation or critical examination. As a result of this acceptance he has been led into the adoption of practices which, verbally, he condemns. He has not recognized that whereas, as an investigator, he begins with a body of documents, and arrives at a series of isolated statements of fact, as a writer of history he begins with an idea, an intuitive apprehension, which thenceforward gives form and unity to the series of events or deeds which he recounts. In his work as an investigator, the historian follows his sources; in his work as an historiographer, he follows his own predilections. As a consequence, however detached and disinterested the historian may be in conducting his preliminary inquiries, once he turns to present his results in narrative form he becomes an artist, interested primarily in conveying to the reader the picture which has taken form in his own mind. The dominating element in historiography is not 'what actually happened,' but the concept

or idea in the light of which the historian views the known facts of the past. Some such concept is necessary if the historian is to rise above the plane of the annalist and construct a synthesis, a unity, a whole. Traditional historiography demands of the historian some view or interpretation of events, but, in making this demand, it leads him beyond the documents, beyond any ascertainable knowledge of the past, beyond the facts altogether, into the realm of 'ends' and of emotionalized speculation.

As we have seen, it has been maintained that logic has 'justified' the established practice of historians. In the first place, logic cannot 'justify,' it describes method. It may, nevertheless, bring to light implications in method of which scholars have themselves been unaware. This has happened in the case of historiography, in which, for special reasons, philosophers have taken a particular interest. In their analysis of the procedure followed, logicians have brought to light the thoroughgoing idealistic tendencies of academic history. The concurrence of history and idealism arises from the way in which each of these pursuits regards the world; historian and philosopher alike conceive of the universe and of the course of events as constituting a 'whole' or unity. The arguments which have been put forward by logicians in defence of historiography are not a justification of history, but of idealism, and the immediate interest of the philosopher in supporting historians is due to the idea that 'history' represents a type of knowledge which is fundamentally different from that of 'natural science.'

If, then, we are to have a science of man, historical investigation must be freed from its present subordination to the art of history-writing.

PART II

THE STUDY OF CHANGE

CHAPTER 7

THE AIMS OF HISTORICAL AND EVOLUTIONARY INQUIRY

THE second major obstacle to the application of the method of science to the study of man lies in the way in which humanists and scientists alike have approached the study of change in time.

The modern historian, as we have seen, has defined the aim of his work to be the narrative statement of what has actually happened in the past; the modern logician has reached the conclusion that the aim of history is the description of 'events,' of occurrences which are unusual, uncommon, unique. It has been pointed out that the historian abstracts from the totality of things to arrive at the unique events which he undertakes to set forth. Obviously, then, there is another class of facts which remains to be considered, a class which differs in some essential from 'events,' a class which, it is agreed, has the marked characteristic that it admits of the application of the method of science.

The most cursory observation of the world makes us aware of objects, entities, 'things,' as well as of 'events.' Science deals with objects, entities, things, and their relations; history concerns itself with events. Now events, as we say, 'happen'; but things undergo change. Things do not 'undergo' events, though they may be affected by them. It is of importance to notice that our everyday, common sense judgment associates change with events. On the other hand, extraordinary as it may seem, scientific investigation, during the last two centuries, has maintained the view that the study of change in objects, entities, and things must be carried on independently of the study of events. As a result of this very remarkable theoretical assumption, the study of history and the study of evolution are carried on in different worlds, and without appreciation of their common relation

to the study of change in the course of time. As the next step in this inquiry, therefore, it will be necessary to examine the historical facts in regard to this separation, which has proved a stumbling-block, no less to humanistic than to biological investigation.

What we are given in experience is an existent *present*, and the question necessarily arises: 'Of what does this present consist?' Two distinct and conflicting views are held by humanistic students as to the content of the 'present' which they undertake to explain.

In the first place, the 'present' may be thought of as a given *situation*, as the culmination of a continuous series of actions or deeds. This view leads to typical results, which have been clearly expressed by Professor Becker. "As for myself," he says, "I find the state of man as it now is in Europe intelligible, in so far as it can be made intelligible, chiefly through a study of the concrete doings and sayings of particular Europeans, more especially during the last hundred years or so; and in the endeavor to attain this kind of understanding, the sort of information which I find most useful is that which reveals the conscious motives and purposes that appear to have had a determining influence."[1] A present situation is thus explained by going back to some point in the past, and by carrying down a narrative of happenings from that beginning to the moment of immediate interest or concern. As, however, the bare narration of what is known to have occurred is not in itself considered to be explanatory, the historian adds, at each step, new series of (psychological) events which he himself has arrived at by intuition. The intelligibility which the historian thus introduces into the materials which he selects for his composition is of the same order as that provided by the author of an historical novel or drama.

As has been pointed out earlier, the modern historian comes naturally by this interest in deeds and motives. In the

[1] Carl Becker, *American Historical Review*, 24 (1918), p. 267.

best tradition of romanticism, the academic historian continues to accept the unusual, the strange, the exceptional, as the substance of his story; and he solves the riddles of the past by the imaginative reconstruction of personal character. Furthermore, romanticism in history finds its inspiration in the conception of the history of a nation as the record of a single life, that is, in the doctrine of 'continuity.' This particular interest had its most complete development in Germany, and under German influence became the approved type of 'history' in academic usage—with results which I have endeavored to describe. The historiography of romanticism focusses attention upon a single series of occurrences relating to one people, nation, or state, and considers this series as a unity or whole. The narrative is concerned with deeds and actions, and the 'present' is regarded simply as the latest situation which has emerged from what has gone before.

Nationalistic history of the Romantic period did not, however, wholly supersede the rationalistic historiography of the eighteenth century. This type is characterized by an insistence that the study of history must take cognizance of all races and nations, as well as of all phases of human activity.[2] From the time of Voltaire, indeed, there has been a persistent current of opposition to the view that history should concern itself primarily with national affairs and with the activities of national governments. At the present time this opposition is marked, and there is a pronounced movement of thought which favors a widely inclusive policy in historical study and inquiry. In his presidential address before the International Congress of Historical Studies in 1913, Lord Bryce called attention to the 'immense expansion' which has taken place in the scope of historical studies. "We have now come to regard history," he said, "as a record of every form of human effort and achievement, concerned

[2] Eduard Fueter, *Histoire de l'historiographie moderne,* tr. par Emile Jeanmaire (Paris, 1914), pp. 415-433.

not any more definitely with political events and institutions than with all the other factors that have moulded man and all the other expressions his creative activity has found." As illustrating this enlargement of view, he mentions specifically the interest taken by historians in the study of primitive man, in the study of early Mediterranean civilizations, and in the study of the habits and manners, the religious ideas and rudimentary political institutions, of backward races and tribes. In short, he remarked that "the historian, who in the days of Thucydides needed to look no further than to Susa on the east and Carthage on the west, must now extend his vision to take in the whole earth."[3]

In the second place, then, the 'present' from which we set out may be thought of as a *condition*—the existing condition of mankind. Here we reach a point of crucial importance. If we accept the 'present' as a status or condition to be investigated, attention will be directed, not so much to deeds and events as to things that exist—institutions, customs, arts, ideas. The consideration of a *situation* involving action leads directly to the naming of the individuals concerned, to speculations regarding their motives and purposes, to the problem of 'causation.' On the other hand, the consideration of a *condition* leads at once to the concept of existences or entities undergoing change. Instead of the question, "Why did a particular individual do this?" the inquiry, in the second case, will take the form: "How are we to account for the differences in institutions, arts, and forms of knowledge which we encounter among different peoples?" Instead of the concept of events resulting from personal decisions, we have the concept of things changing slowly, *pedetemtim*, as Lucretius expressed it, step by step.

The contrast between the acceptance of the 'present' as a situation, emerging as a result of antecedent actions, and the 'present' as a condition of things, resulting from the operation of changes in the past, reveals the source of all the

[3] *Cf.* also Eduard Fueter, as cited, pp. 752-758: "Remarques finales."

difficulties and differences of opinion which have arisen in dealing with history as a subject of study and investigation. History as an academic subject deals with situations and happenings, with actions and motives, not with the problem of change and with the processes through which institutions, arts, and ideas have undergone modification in the course of time. As a consequence, academic history ends in narratives which embody, for each generation, the 'human interest' of the past, not in statements as to 'how things work' in the world of men. Academic history, as now carried on, leads to historiography, and to problems of æsthetics and philosophy; history conceived as the study of change should lead directly to scientific investigation and research.

There is, however, another way in which this contrast presents itself: the acceptance of the 'present' as a situation has led to the study of history in the usual understanding of the term; the acceptance of the 'present' as a condition has led to the study which we designate 'evolution.' It will appear, in what follows, that just as the study of history has concentrated attention upon events to the ignoring of the study of processes of change, so the study of evolution has concentrated attention upon processes of change to the exclusion of events. We may now turn to inquire how this separation has been brought about.

CHAPTER 8

THE IDEA OF PROGRESS AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE COMPARATIVE METHOD

IN the presence of any phenomenon of nature, the early Greek philosophers asked themselves two questions: 'Of what elements is it composed?' and 'How did it originate?' Keeping to the second question, it is to be observed that the form of the inquiry, 'How did it originate?' inevitably throws the mind back upon some earlier, and usually remote, happening or situation, from which as a point of departure it turns to retraverse at leisure the whole interval separating that beginning from the present. For the Greeks, and for other peoples, such as the ancient Hebrews, genealogy was the framework into which these explanations were fitted, and events were arranged in a genealogical chain stretching from the imagined ultimate source, of the family or of causation, to the present situation or occurrence which is the immediate object of interest. In relation to this investigation of origins and genealogies, it is of importance to recognize that when we ask, 'How did it originate?' we are referring to an explicit something which is before us here and now. It is the form of the question that carries the mind back; the matter to be explained still remains in the present.

A genealogy has three elements: a person present or spoken of; a series of ancestors; and a specific 'first' individual, source, or origin. Starting with this pattern, a convention or type scheme was arrived at by the Greeks for the explanation of things in general. "The genealogical method was capable of wide extension, and could be applied to other than human or even animal relationships. Hesiod's Theogony is a genealogy of heaven and earth, and all that in them

is. According to Aeschylus, gain is bred from gain, slaughter from slaughter, woe from woe. . . . The ascending lines of ancestry were followed up until they led to a common father of all; every series of outrages was traced through successive reprisals back to an initial crime; and more generally every event was affiliated to a preceding event, until the whole chain had been attached to an ultimate self-existing cause."[1] In the hands of the earlier Greeks, then, the genealogical method provided a form into which could be fitted an explanation either of a situation in the affairs of men or of a condition of things in the world of nature.

We have seen, however, that the procedure of explaining or elucidating a given present by stating its antecedents in time is what constitutes the 'historical method.' "To comprehend the significance of the present," Professor Bury says, "we must be acquainted with the history of the past. This," he continues, "is the main reason (according to our present ideas) why a study of history is desirable, if not indispensable, for the man who undertakes to share in the conduct of public affairs, and is desirable also for the private citizen who votes, and criticises, and contributes to the shaping of public opinion."[2] The 'historical method' involves the recognition of three terms: an existent present; a point of departure or beginning; and a series of occurrences connecting the origin with the present. It is obvious that this formula is identical with the 'genealogical method' of the Greeks, and that the 'historical method' represents the perpetuation of the first means employed in the attempt to deal with the succession of events and changes in the course of time.

The earlier Greeks, to all appearance, made no distinction between the genealogical presentation of a series of events and the study of change in time. The latter subject came, however, to occupy an important place in philosophical dis-

[1] A. W. Benn, *The Greek Philosophers* (2d ed., London, 1914), p. 49.
[2] J. B. Bury, *The Ancient Greek Historians* (New York, 1909), p. 249.

cussions at a subsequent period; in the hands of the philosophers inquiry took the form, not of a scientific investigation of the *modus operandi* of change, but of an analysis of its metaphysical implications.

It has been remarked that, strictly speaking, there are only two periods in the history of occidental philosophy, the pre-Socratic and the Socratic. The first took external nature as its point of departure. Socrates, by introducing the logical method of definition, discovered a new order of existence, which was subject, not to mechanical, but to teleological laws. The Socratics, still envisaging change under the old genealogical form, brought it into the foreground of discussion in relation to the concept of teleology. Plato and Aristotle utilized the genealogical mode of presentation in their consideration of the different forms of government, but they set up genealogical series for the purpose of developing a teleological argument. Thus Aristotle outlines the genealogy of society from its beginning in the household, through the village, to its latest form in the city-state; the use which he makes of this series, however, is to show that, while the household or family comes first in time, the state is logically prior, since it is the end (*telos*) or complete development of the earlier associations.[3]

In Aristotle's view, teleology is the true mode of approach to the study of nature. The explanation of a thing is reached only when we are able to view it in the light of a purpose. All movement is directed toward some end, and becomes intelligible only when this end has been discovered and defined. Of the special points in Aristotle's philosophy which have continued to influence thought in immediate relation to the study of man, one or two only need be mentioned in the present connection.

In the first place, it should be borne in mind that Aristotle

[3] A. C. Bradley, "Aristotle's Conception of the State," in *Hellenica, a Collection of Essays,* ed. by Evelyn Abbott (London, 1880), p. 198. W. L. Newman, *The Politics of Aristotle,* vol. 1 (Oxford, 1887), pp. 84-85. W. D. Ross, *Aristotle* (New York, 1924), pp. 236-237.

regarded the end or purpose of each particular thing to be the realization or actualization of its highest possibilities, and that he identified 'that which is best for each thing' with 'the best it can do.' This doctrine came to exert a profound influence upon ideas of development in the eighteenth century.

Again, it is necessary to call attention to his idea that only that is natural which takes place of itself, or contains the principle of change in itself. In opposition to that which is natural, or which comes by nature, he recognized that which is accidental, or which comes by chance, in other words, the emergence of results which were not intended. From this it follows that the aim of scientific inquiry is to determine what is natural, or normal, in contradistinction to what has happened by accident or by chance. This doctrine has had a determining influence upon modern conceptions of the purpose or aim of scientific investigation, and represents the greatest single obstacle to the unification of the studies of 'history' and 'evolution.'

Furthermore, it is to be observed that, in considering the problems presented by the existence of different forms of life, Aristotle saw in the organic world "merely a juxtaposition of higher and lower, not a succession, and still less a derivation of the one from the other."[4] It is of particular interest to note that a theory of development appears, in Aristotle's writings, only in connection with his discussion of social organization, of science, and of art. Here, however, we find the recognition of an ascent from lower to higher forms, a progress gradually realized in the course of time. "This movement [he thought] has already reached its goal times without number, and has as often been compelled to ebb back to its starting-point. For secular catastrophes, repeated with immeasurable frequency, have laid the earth waste, destroyed the race of mankind down to a small rem-

[4] Theodor Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers,* vol. 4, tr. by G. G. Berry (New York, 1912), p. 154.

nant, and then allowed that race to rise anew and enter upon and retravel its ascending path of civilization again and again and again."[5] Clearly, then, Aristotle held the view that human advancement goes through a determined, or natural, series of steps in successive 'cycles.'

In the modern period, it was likewise in relation to the study of man that the problem of progressive change came to attract attention.

The later years of the seventeenth century are marked, in the history of literature, by the famous 'quarrel' as to the relative merits of the ancients and moderns.[6] It should be observed that the disputants on the opposing sides of this controversy utilized historical materials, but they did not write histories. What they were concerned with was a comparison of the condition of things, *i.e.*, of the arts, sciences, inventions, morals, in ancient and modern times. The result of this activity was the formation, in relation to the study of man, of certain ideas which have continued to influence the views entertained of progressive change and of evolution down to the present.

Of these conceptions, one of the most influential is the analogy between the development or life cycle of the individual and the progress of the race. In modern, as in ancient times, observation of life has led men to repeated endeavors to introduce some measure of intelligibility into the vicissitudes of fortune by framing for themselves a picture or model of the course of change in the existence of peoples and of humanity. In the reign of Trajan, the historian Florus

[5] Theodor Gomperz, as cited, p. 126.

[6] Hippolyte Rigault, *Histoire de la querelle des anciens et des modernes* (Paris, 1856). Alfred Michiels, "Querelle des anciens et des modernes," in his *Histoire des idées littéraires en France au xix^e siècle* (4e éd., Paris, 1863), pp. 32-150. Ferdinand Brunetière, "La formation de l'idée de progrès au xviii^e siècle" [1892], in his *Etudes critiques sur l'histoire de la littérature française, 5e série* (6e éd., Paris, 1922), pp. 183-250. Jules Delvaille, *Essai sur l'histoire de l'idée de progrès jusqu'à la fin du xviii^e siècle* (Paris, 1910). Hubert Gillot, *La querelle des anciens et des modernes en France* (Paris, 1914). J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress; An Inquiry Into Its Origin and Growth* (London, 1920).

had asked his readers to consider the Roman people 'as if it were one man' passing through the stages of birth, adolescence, maturity, and old age. In the time of Alaric, the Visigoth, St. Augustine extended this view, and envisaged the life of humanity, the succession of the generations from Adam to the end of the ages, as the life of a single person. The analogy reappears at the Renaissance, and becomes an integral part of the thought of the seventeenth century. As expressed by Pascal, just as the individual advances from day to day in knowledge, so mankind makes continual progress as the world grows older; hence, he thought, the entire sequence of men, through the ages, should be looked upon as a single individual existing always and learning continually.[7] In this form, the analogy recurs insistently throughout the eighteenth century, and enters significantly into the system of Auguste Comte. In the later nineteenth century, the analogy, again expanded, becomes identified with the "biological view of the universe," so that "the whole scheme of things is regarded as a single organism, advancing methodically through stages of its growth in obedience to inevitable laws of self-expansion."[8]

A second important influence in shaping our modern ideas of progressive change is likewise to be traced back to the author of *The City of God.* Polybius had envisaged the history of the ancient world as unified by the extension of the political power of Rome. St. Augustine gave unity to the history of mankind by conceiving it as subject to the unitary government of God. In opposition to the rationalism of Descartes, Bossuet, in 1681, brought forward anew the thesis of

[7] Blaise Pascal, "Fragment d'un Traité du vide," in his *Pensées et opuscules,* publiés par Léon Brunschvig (5e éd., Paris, 1909), pp. 80-81.

For examples of the use of the analogy, see Jules Delvaille, as cited, pp. 35, 86, 106, 165, 188, 194, 195, 207, 222, 242, 264, 286, 384, 391, 450, 458, 461, 480, 554, 557, 570, 620, 675.

Cf. J. A. Kleinsorge, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Lehre vom Parallelismus der Individual- und der Gesamtentwicklung* (Jena, 1900).

[8] J. A. Symonds, *Essays Speculative and Suggestive* (3d ed., London, 1907), p. 5.

St. Augustine, and in his *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* depicted the events of world history as falling into a series of epochs, following the design of Providence for the accomplishment of a specific purpose. As we shall see, the work of Bossuet became the model for the generalized histories of culture of Turgot, Condorcet, and Auguste Comte.

A third result of the 'quarrel' of the ancients and moderns was the incorporation in humanistic inquiry of conceptions of scientific method derived from the philosophy of Descartes.[9] In the dispute, those who took the side of the moderns were under the necessity of defending their position in face of able and aggressive opponents. In this situation they availed themselves of an argument based upon the Cartesian axiom of the stability, regularity, permanence, and immutability of the laws of nature.[10] These laws, they contended, are constant; they are the same to-day as they have been throughout the past. Nature, therefore, produces men of equal ability and genius in every age.[11] It follows, consequently, that the moderns, being in possession of the accumulated experience of preceding generations, have an advantage over antiquity comparable to that of old age over childhood.

The weak spot in this argument, to the disputants of the seventeenth century, was the admitted break in continuity represented by the Middle Ages.[12] If the doctrine of the invariability of the laws or powers of nature was to be maintained, it was necessary to account for the actual breaches of continuity in the past. The explanation given by Perrault

[9] Jules Delvaille, as cited, see index, p. 744. *Cf.* Francisque Bouillier, *Histoire de la philosophie cartésienne* (3e éd., Paris, 1868). Louis Liard, *Descartes* (Paris, 1882). Alfred Fouillée, "Descartes et les doctrines contemporaines," in his *Le mouvement idéaliste et la réaction contre la science positive* (2e éd., Paris, 1896), pp. 302-318. Gustave Lanson, "L'influence de la philosophie cartésienne sur la littérature française," *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 4 (1896), pp. 517-550. Norman Kemp Smith, *Studies in the Cartesian Philosophy* (London, 1902).

[10] J. B. Bury, as cited, pp. 82, 99, 112.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 84, 86.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 85, 106, 156.

and Fontenelle was that while nature makes the same provision for advancement in every age, barbarian invasions, long wars, and governments which discourage science and art may occasion interruptions of progress, and impose long periods of ignorance and bad taste.[13] Evidently, then, advancement would be continuous, were it not for the discontinuities caused by the misapplied energies of men.

The outcome of the 'quarrel' was that those who took the side of the moderns were led to formulate the views (1) that advancement in knowledge is natural and necessary, certain and endless; (2) that advancement in knowledge can only proceed slowly, and by insensible degrees; and (3) that knowledge is continually advancing toward perfection.[14] In the earlier part of the eighteenth century, these views were extended, as by the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, to the general progress of man. The conception of civilization progressing slowly but surely toward the goal of human happiness in the future thus became established as a settled conviction.[15]

The matter of importance, in this formulation, is that through it modern thought became committed to the assumption that progress is 'natural' and to be expected. As a consequence, from the end of the seventeenth century men have concerned themselves, not with the investigation of the conditions under which advancement takes place, but with inquiry into the obstacles which are thought to have delayed or interrupted the 'natural course' of development, and with proposals for the removal of these obstacles. A typical expression of this point of view appears, for example, in the statement of Malthus, in 1803, that "In an inquiry concerning the improvement of society, the mode of conducting the subject which naturally presents itself, is 1. To investigate the causes that have hitherto impeded the progress of mankind toward happiness; and 2. To examine the proba-

[13] J. B. Bury, as cited, pp. 85-86, 106.
[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105, 109, 112, 126, 171.
[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137, 143.

bility of the total or partial removal of these causes in the future."[16]

The judgment that progressive change is natural carried with it, in the eighteenth century, a world of implication which twentieth-century thought has been too ready to overlook. While, in the earlier period, the 'natural' was perhaps most commonly opposed to the 'miraculous' or to the 'artificial,' particular interest, in the present connection, attaches to the opposition of the 'natural' to the 'unusual,'[17] that is, of the normal to the exceptional, of that which was regarded as frequent to what was thought to be rare. In more recent phraseology, the same concept is expressed in the opposition between that which is recurrent and that which happens but once. What gives this distinction its significance is that, in the eighteenth century, scientific inquiry concerned itself with what was 'natural,' to the exclusion of what was judged to be 'unnatural,' 'monstrous,' 'accidental,' and 'unusual.'

Cartesian philosophy assumed the existence of an established order in the universe, and of a body of laws established by Nature. These conceptions were so vivid, for eighteenth-century thought, that more than one attempt was made to set forth the 'Code of Nature' in detail. The confidence with which such an enterprise was undertaken was an outgrowth of the Cartesian view that the true method of science was represented exclusively in the procedure of geometry; in other words, that scientific method consisted in logical deduction from 'clear and simple ideas' accepted as axioms. In conformity with this method, definite results were the more readily arrived at, in the study of man, because of the accepted opinion that the System of Nature was teleological throughout. It was not doubted that the laws of Nature, like those of Louis XIV, were designed with reference to predetermined ends. Hence the laws of Nature

[16] T. R. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (new ed., London, 1803), p. 1.

[17] David Hume, *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary,* ed. by T. H. Green and T. H. Grose, vol. 2 (London, 1875), pp. 275-276.

came to be thought of as the orderly provisions which Nature makes for the realization of certain specific purposes, and these purposes, discernible by the exercise of reason, were nothing other than the promotion of the progress and happiness of mankind.

The System of Nature, it is true, is not immediately apparent in the seemingly hopeless entanglement and diversity of the data of experience. In the study of man, however, the belief was entertained that the system could be determined by the aid of analogy, and the scientific study of society was envisaged after the pattern of the contemporary study of physiology. Now, if we are to arrive at a knowledge of the 'true' functioning of the human organism, it is evident that we must ignore the peculiarities, abnormalities, and accidental characteristics of any particular 'subject' examined. A physiology will not be a series of descriptions of unusual or pathological cases; it will not even be the description of any actual human body; it will be a description of what is conceived to be 'the' human body, in its functional aspects. Evidently, then, physiology, as a science, has for its object a knowledge of what is natural or normal, abstraction being made from the 'accidental' aspects of what is given in experience. It is this conception of the aim of scientific inquiry which dominated the thought of the eighteenth century, and which has continued to maintain a pervasive influence in humanistic inquiry down to the present.

Furthermore, it is of importance to recognize that the procedure of physiology was taken as a model for the scientific study of how society undergoes change in the course of time, as well as for the investigation of how society is constituted. Physiology is interested in tracing the course of development of the living being from its embryonic state to its final dissolution, as well as in the functioning of the mature organism. Here, again, its interest is in the 'natural' or normal aspects of growth, in abstraction from the 'accidental' differences which may appear in the life of any

particular individual. Leibniz had expressed the view that "each created being is pregnant with its future state, and that it naturally follows a certain course, if nothing hinders it."[18] The humanists of the eighteenth century, associating this view with Pascal's analogy, assumed that the scientific study of change must have for its aim the determination of the 'natural' or normal course of development of social groups, abstraction being made from the 'accidental' interferences or hindrances occasioned by historical 'events.' In its full realization, they envisaged the scientific study of society as concerned with the discovery of the orderly provisions which Nature has made for the 'natural' development or progress of nations and of mankind.

The results of this reasoning appear, fully developed, in the work of Adam Smith. The great object of his inquiries, Dugald Stewart states, was to illustrate the provisions made by nature for a gradual and progressive augmentation in the means of natural wealth, and to demonstrate that the most effectual plan for advancing a people to greatness is to maintain that order of things which nature has pointed out.[19] It is of the highest importance to observe that if we adopt this point of view, and undertake the investigation of the provision which Nature has made for the "natural progress of opulence in a country," historical events will be conceived merely as interferences with the 'natural order.'[20] Hence inquiry will proceed upon the assumption that "in most cases, it is of more importance to ascertain the progress that is most simple, than the progress that is most agreeable to fact, for . . . it is certainly true, that the real progress is not always the most natural. It may have been determined by particular accidents, which are not likely

[18] Leibniz, *The Monadology, and Other Philosophical Writings,* tr. by Robert Latta (Oxford, 1898), p. 44, n. 1.

[19] Dugald Stewart, "Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith" [1793], in his *Collected Works,* ed. by Sir William Hamilton, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1858), p. 60.

[20] *Ibid.,* p. 36.

again to occur, and which cannot be considered as forming any part of that general provision which nature has made for the improvement of the race."[21]

We are now in a position to see that the 'theoretical,' 'conjectural,'[22] 'hypothetical,'[23] or 'natural'[24] history of the eighteenth century represents, not some curious aberration of thought, but a most serious effort to lay the foundations for a strictly scientific approach to the study of man.

As a consequence, then, of the adoption of the Cartesian conception of the method of science, it was assumed that progressive change is natural or normal, that it is always slow and gradual, and that it leads toward a condition of perfection. It was assumed, further, that the laws of nature represent the orderly provision which Nature has made for the attainment of her purposes or ends. With these presuppositions, the purpose of scientific inquiry was understood to be the determination of the natural or normal course of change. What this mode of approach entailed was that the investigator should ignore, or rather eliminate from consideration, the intrusive influences which had interfered with the operations of the 'natural order' in the course of time. The point of view was thus arrived at which regarded historical 'events' as unimportant and irrelevant for the purposes of scientific inquiry in the investigation of 'progress' and of 'evolution.'

For an understanding of the later activities of humanists, it is of importance to observe how the investigation of the 'theoretical' or 'hypothetical' history of the eighteenth century was to be carried on.

The debate over the relative merits of the ancients and moderns led to the comparison of the conditions of things—

21 Dugald Stewart, as cited, p. 37.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 34.

23 J. J. Rousseau, "Discours sur l'inégalité," in his *Political Writings*, ed. by C. E. Vaughan, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1915), pp. 139, 141.

24 David Hume, "The Natural History of Religion," in his *Essays*, as cited, pp. 309 ff.

of knowledge, morals, and arts—in classical antiquity and in modern times. In another field, the seventeenth century likewise instituted comparison between (*a*) the social conditions observed in existing 'savage' groups and (*b*) the conditions revealed in the earliest historical records of civilized peoples.

Some suggestion of this mode of comparison is to be found in the *Leviathan* of Thomas Hobbes (1651). In "the state of nature," Hobbes thought, men were "in that condition which is called warre." Answering the possible objection that, in the past, there never had been "such a time, nor condition of warre as this," he argued that "there are many places where they live so now."[25] The significance of this statement is that Hobbes accepted information in regard to the present condition of "the savage people in many places in America" as evidence for the condition of European peoples in times past. John Locke (1690), discussing the early development of the kingship, considered it necessary to "look back as far as history will direct us." Having presented a generalized description of the status of kings in the earliest times, he appealed, in confirmation of his description, to the practices of "the people of America," and justified this appeal on the ground that America "is still a pattern of the first ages in Asia and Europe."[26]

From these beginnings, the practice of comparing the present condition of men in various parts of Asia, Africa, and America with the early condition of men in Europe was widely adopted. Fontenelle, in the seventeenth century, had thought there was "une conformité étonnante" between the myths of the Americans and those of the Greeks.[27] Père Alexandre discovered similarities in the religious ceremonies

[25] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan,* ed. by A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1904), p. 85.

[26] John Locke, "Of Civil Government," in his *Works,* vol. 4 (12th ed., London, 1824), pp. 399, 402.

[27] Fontenelle, "Sur l'histoire," in his *Œuvres,* t. 9 (nouvelle éd., Amsterdam, 1764), p. 243.

of the Chinese and those of the Greeks and Romans.[28] Père Lafitau was of the opinion that the natives of America bore a striking resemblance to the Greeks of the time of Homer and to the Hebrews of the time of Moses.[29] Jaucourt, in the *Encyclopédie*, compared the rites of purification practised by the negroes of the Gold Coast with those of the ancient Hebrews.[30] Adam Ferguson (1767) held that "the inhabitants of Britain, at the time of the first Roman invasions, resembled, in many things, the present natives of North America."[31] The views of the author of the *Essay on the History of Civil Society* may, indeed, be taken as typical of the period. He goes on to say that "Thucydides, notwithstanding the prejudice of his country against the name of Barbarian, understood that it was in the customs of barbarous nations he was to study the more ancient manners of Greece. The Romans," he continues, "might have found an image of their own ancestors, in the representations they have given of ours; and if ever an Arab clan shall become a civilized nation, or any American tribe escape the poison which is administered by our traders of Europe, it may be from the relations of the present time, and the descriptions which are now given by travellers, that such a people, in after ages, may best collect the accounts of their origin. It is in their present condition that we are to behold, as in a mirror, the

[28] Noel Alexandre, *Conformité des cérémonies chinoises avec l'idolâtrie grecque et romaine* (Cologne, 1700). Also M. de la Créquinière, *Conformité des coutumes des Indiens orientaux avec celles des Juifs et des autres peuples de l'antiquité* (Bruxelles, 1704).

[29] J. F. Lafitau, *Mœurs des sauvages amériquains comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps* (Paris, 1724). *Cf.* Arnold van Gennep, *Religions, mœurs et légendes*, 5e série (Paris, 1914), pp. 111-133. Gilbert Chinard, *L'Amérique et le rêve exotique dans la littérature française* (Paris, 1913), pp. 315-326. Note Chinard's remark, p. 321, n. 1: "Ces rapprochements avec l'antiquité se retrouvent chez tous les voyageurs qui ont des lettres."

[30] René Hubert, *Les sciences sociales dans l'Encyclopédie* (Paris, 1923), p. 84. Also Charles de Brosses, *Du culte des dieux fétiches ou Parallèle de l'ancienne religion de l'Egypte avec la religion actuelle de Nigritie* (1760). *Cf.* Arnold van Gennep, as cited, pp. 161-178.

[31] Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (8th ed., Philadelphia, 1819), p. 137.

features of our own progenitors. . . . If," he concludes, "in advanced years, we would form a just notion of our progress from the cradle, we must have recourse to the nursery; and from the example of those who are still in the period of life we mean to describe, take our representation of past manners, that cannot, in any other way, be recalled."[32] Finally, it may be observed that William Robertson (1777) thought that "there is nothing wonderful in the similitude between the Americans and the barbarous nations of our continent." The human mind, in his opinion, "holds a course so regular, that in every age and country the dominion of particular passions will be attended with similar effects." Hence, "without supposing any consanguinity between such distant nations, or imagining that their religious ceremonies were conveyed by tradition from the one to the other, we may ascribe this uniformity, which in many instances seems very amazing, to the natural operation of superstition and enthusiasm upon the weakness of the human mind."[33]

By the end of the first half of the eighteenth century, two important views had thus been established. It was accepted, first, that the study of European history revealed the fact that there had been a progressive movement of change from ancient to modern times; and, second, that the present condition of 'savage' groups might be taken to represent the early condition of civilized peoples. Now, the great aim of Cartesian science was to discover the major uniformities (such as the laws of motion) which lie behind the explicit differences which are revealed by the senses in the actual world. When, therefore, the men of the eighteenth century began to compare the various states of culture made known by historical study and geographical discovery, the scientific interests of the time led them to devote their attention to the

[32] Adam Ferguson, as cited, pp. 146-147.

[33] William Robertson, *The History of America*, vol. 1 (London, 1777), pp. 268, 269, 270. Dr. Robertson's remarks will be found to be of particular significance for the history of anthropology if considered as a reaction against the 'diffusion' theories current in the eighteenth century.

similarities[34] which could be detected in these various cultures. As a result of the direction thus given to inquiry, it was found that the states of culture discovered to exist in America, Asia, and Africa were similar to the states of culture known, from historical evidence, to have existed in ancient Palestine, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Hence the inference was forced upon the observer that these similarities pointed to a uniform series of stages in the development of mankind. The next step, therefore, in the study of man was the attempt to arrive at a synthetic statement of the successive stages in human development.

The thought had already suggested itself to Locke that there was no imaginable condition of human society which might not be found in actual existence somewhere in the world, but he does not appear to have envisaged the possibility of arranging the different societies in a 'progressive' order. It remained for Turgot, in 1750, to initiate the long series of modern attempts (so far as appears, without reference to Hesiod, Aeschylus, or Lucretius) to formulate a scheme of cultural stages. The immediate stimulus for Turgot's effort was derived from Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1681). This exceedingly influential work had presented the history of mankind under the form of twelve epochs, beginning with "Adam, or Creation; the first age of the world," and coming down to "Charlemagne, or the establishment of the New Empire." Turgot, dissatisfied with this 'historical' account, formed the idea of rewriting Bossuet's history in the light of the concept of Progress. Universal history, he thought, should display the successive advances of the human race, and undertake to point out the causes that have contributed to these results. In his *Plan de deux discours sur l'histoire universelle* he describes, not the epochs of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and the Capture of Troy, but the condition of man in the successive stages

[34] *Cf.* Karl Marbe, *Die Gleichförmigkeit in der Welt* (München, 1916-1919), Bd. I, chs. 2-7; Bd. II, ch. 2.

of culture: the hunting stage, followed by pastoral life, the rise of agriculture, and the introduction of government.[35]

It is of interest to note that Rousseau, in his *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (1755), similarly recognized a series of cultural stages in the period anterior to the establishment of civil government.[36] It was not, however, until 1793 that the suggestions of Turgot were carried out, in a way to enlist the sympathy and interest of the public, in Condorcet's *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain.* From the appearance of this memorable work, the procedure of delineating the cultural development of mankind in the form of an 'ideal' or generalized series—what Dugald Stewart described as 'theoretical history'—has retained a dominant influence in the study of man, more particularly in sociology and anthropology.

We have seen that Bossuet had envisaged the course of history as a whole or unity, as constituting a unilinear series of 'epochs.' Condorcet imagined the cultural development of mankind as a unilinear series of 'stages.' We have seen that Pascal represented the advancement of mankind as analogous to the growth or development of the individual. Condorcet pictured universal history as the progress of the human race advancing as an immense whole steadily, though slowly, toward ultimate perfection—"à une perfection plus grande." It should be remembered, further, that Leibniz envisaged the universe under the aspect of a series of monads or units, continuous, without break, from the simplest imaginable form up to the completeness and perfection of the Divine Being. Condorcet thought that the actual state of the universe exhibited, at the same instant, every *nuance*

[35] Turgot, *Œuvres* [nouvelle éd.], par Gustave Schelle, t. 1 (Paris, 1913), p. 278.

[36] A. O. Lovejoy, "The Supposed Primitivism of Rousseau's Discourse on Inequality," *Modern Philology,* 21 (1923), pp. 165-186. *Cf.* also Jean Morel, "Recherches sur les sources du Discours de l'inégalité," *Annales de la Société Jean-Jacques Rousseau,* 5 (1909), pp. 119-198. Gilbert Chinard, as cited, pp. 341-365.

of barbarism and civilization, and thus displayed at one view every step of the human spirit, every stage through which it had passed, the history of every age.

The combined influence of these conceptions of continuous series provided a foundation for the opinion that the infinite variety of human cultural groups might be arranged in an 'ideal' series, representing the 'natural order' of the development of mankind. This 'natural order' was accepted as applicable at once to the progressive stages exhibited in the historical series and to the differences of culture discoverable in the present.

CHAPTER I

THE SOCIOLOGICAL METHOD OF AUGUSTE COMTE

WITH the beginning of the nineteenth century, two distinct movements are to be found dividing the humanistic field. History sets out anew with the determination to confine its attention to 'events,' the facts of the past; the study of man takes for its aim the discovery of the 'natural order' of change in society, the determination of the 'laws of progress.' The *impasse* at which history has arrived having already been described (Part I), it now becomes necessary to examine the results which have been achieved in the second type of inquiry.

The outstanding figure in the effort to create a scientific study of man, or of society, during the nineteenth century, was Auguste Comte, whose *Cours de Philosophie Positive* (1830-1842) has exercised a marked influence down to the present time. For an appreciation of Comte's indebtedness to the eighteenth century, and of his influence upon later thought, an exposition of his mode of procedure, which is based throughout upon the employment of deduction and analogy, must be attempted. The statement, unfortunately, cannot be made with brevity.

All systematic inquiry, Comte explains, is either theoretical or practical; positive philosophy will concern itself only with the theoretical. Theoretical inquiry, again, consists of two parts: (1) sciences which are abstract, general, and law-discovering; and (2) sciences which are concrete, particular, and descriptive. Positive philosophy will concern itself only with the abstract, since the concrete sciences are merely secondary or derived, consisting in the application of the 'laws' previously discovered to the actual existence of different entities.[1] Following the analogy of physics, each of the

[1] Auguste Comte, *Cours de philosophie positive* (4e éd., Paris, 1877), t. 1, pp. 56-57.

abstract sciences is subdivided into a statics and a dynamics. Thus, in the organic sphere, Comte distinguishes between abstract biology and concrete 'natural history'; the latter is not considered. Abstract biology is divided into (*a*) anatomy or biological statics and (*b*) physiology or biological dynamics. Similarly, he divides social physics (to which he later gave the name of 'sociology') into (*a*) social anatomy or social statics and (*b*) social physiology or social dynamics.

It is necessary to call attention to some of the characteristic features of Comte's treatment of abstract biology, since this constitutes the background of his formulation of social physics.

In the first place, anatomy or biological statics, in his system, is concerned with the investigation of the 'laws' of the organism. This inquiry involves (i) the study of the structure and composition of the 'tissues' or anatomical elements and (ii) the construction of 'la grande hiérarchie biologique.' In his discussion of this hierarchy or classification, Comte specifically states that all known or possible organisms must be coördinated in a single series, 'necessarily linear,' in which each species will occupy a 'rigorously determined' place.[2] He conceives of a final arrangement of species in an order such that any given species will be inferior to all those which precede it, and superior to all those which follow it. As against Lamarck,[3] Comte insists upon the doctrine of the fixity of species; he condemns all 'vain speculations' into the origin of the forms of life, and holds, as a great natural law, that all species have a tendency to perpetuate themselves indefinitely, with the same principal characteristics, despite the variation of the exterior conditions of existence.

In the second place, physiology or biological dynamics is concerned with the investigation of the 'laws' of life. It inquires into the relation of the organism to its environment, and into the functions of organs. It investigates the sensi-

[2] Auguste Comte, as cited, t. 3, p. 387.
[3] *Ibid.*, t. 3, xliie leçon, passim.

bility and irritability of organisms, and the mechanism of animal movements. It deals with the phenomena of the generation or reproduction, the growth or development, and the deterioration or gradual decline from maturity to death of living bodies.[4] It should be observed particularly that, in Comte's system, 'evolution' is represented, first, by the life cycle of the individual, and, second, by the rigidly constituted classificatory series, which represents a life cycle 'perfectly analogous' to the development of the individual. In Comte's view, the investigation of the development of the entire series of the forms of life is to be carried on by an inquiry into the principles of growth as exhibited in the life of the individual.

Coming now to social physics, we find, first, that social anatomy or social statics is described as being concerned with the study of organization; it makes analysis of the conditions of existence of the individual, of the family, and of society; it investigates the actions and reactions of the different parts of the social system. Secondly, we find that social physiology or social dynamics is concerned with the study of social life. At this point, however, a serious difficulty arises, for here Comte's parallel between physiology or biological dynamics and social dynamics breaks down, since he describes social dynamics as the study of progress.[5] The clue to his position lies, of course, in his adoption of Pascal's analogy between the growth of the individual and the progress of the race, and his rejection of Lamarck's argument to show that species undergo modification in the course of time.

It may be observed, by way of criticism, that the original source of weakness in Comte's attempt to arrive at a science of society lies in the fact that his *Cours de philosophie positive* is not the product of a first-hand investigation of social phenomena. In its essential aspects, it is just a highly elabo-

[4] Auguste Comte, as cited, t. 3, pp. 477, 480.
[5] *Ibid.*, t. 4, pp. 232, 262.

rated argument to show that a science of society is a desideratum, with a demonstration, carried out by the use of deduction and analogy, of the relation in which such a social science might conceivably stand to existing 'natural sciences.' On the other hand, Comte's achievement consists primarily in his systematization of current ideas on scientific and humanistic subjects, which necessarily were derived in the main from the thought of the eighteenth century.[6]

In considering Comte's reformulation of the specific views of the eighteenth century in regard to the study of man, it is of the highest interest, in the present connection, to observe that he adopted completely the principles of the comparative method, which thus became a central feature of humanistic thought in the nineteenth century.

In sociology, Comte says, it is necessary to consider the principal forms of society in the order of their increasing importance. To determine this order, we must, in the first instance, compare the different states of human society as they exist throughout the world at the present time. Owing, he says, to causes which are not well understood, all groups

[6] "La mérite de Comte est d'avoir arrangé en système une foule de notions éparses dans l'intellectualité de son époque: il a réussi à les fondre en une synthèse parfaitement cohérente. Il est un arrangeur, non un créateur. La cohérence logique est, selon lui, le caractère distinctif d'une science. Mais bien que son œuvre soit cohérente, elle n'est pas scientifique car ses prétendues lois sont rarement la fidèle expression des faits. . . . Il est un homme de transition entre le siècle de déduction et celui de l'observation." Maurice Defourny, *La sociologie positiviste: Auguste Comte* (Louvain, 1902), pp. 353-354.

For discussion of Comte's work, *cf.* also: Herbert Spencer, *The Classification of the Sciences; to Which Are Added Reasons for Dissenting from the Philosophy of M. Comte* (London, 1864); also in his *Essays, Scientific, Political, and Speculative,* vol. 2 (New York, 1891), pp. 74-144. John Stuart Mill, *Auguste Comte and Positivism* (London, 1865). T. H. Huxley, "The Scientific Aspects of Positivism," in his *Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews* (New York, 1870), pp. 147-173. John Fiske, *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy* (London, 1874). Franck Alengry, *Essai historique et critique sur la sociologie chez Auguste Comte* (Paris, 1900). Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *La philosophie d'Auguste Comte* (3e éd., Paris, 1913). Paul Barth, *Die Philosophie der Geschichte als Soziologie,* I Teil (3-4 Aufl., Leipzig, 1922), pp. 175-221. M. S. Harris, *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte* ([Ithaca, N. Y.], 1923).

have not yet attained the same level of development. As a result of this inequality, however, the early stages of civilized groups may all be observed to-day among primitive peoples distributed in different parts of the globe.[7] The comparative method, therefore, presents to us, at the present moment, all the possible stages of human development as something to be submitted to direct scrutiny. Nevertheless, Comte observes, this mode of inquiry is not free from danger. It displays the various social stages existing side by side, but it gives no clue to the sequence of development or to the filiation of social systems. The comparison of existing societies would, Comte points out, lead inevitably to a misconception of the order in which the different states have succeeded each other if the order of succession could not be determined by an independent mode of investigation.[8] The second phase of the comparative method, that by which the different successive stages through which humanity has passed is to be determined, is the 'historical method properly so-called.' Since the use of this 'historical method' (the construction of 'ideal series') permits us to determine the order of human development without risk of error, it necessarily becomes the principal mode of sociological inquiry.[9] It is, however, to be remarked that the first phase of the comparative method is not superseded by the study of history. The lowest stages of human development can be investigated in no other way than by the observation of existing primitive groups. Moreover, as there are aspects of social development of which history ('l'histoire de notre civilisation') retains no traces, the comparative method must be utilized to fill the gaps which it leaves.[10]

The comparative method, as Comte explains, utilizes two series of facts: those provided by observation of existing societies, and those provided by the study of the past. From

[7] Auguste Comte, as cited, t. 4, p. 317.
[8] *Ibid.*, t. 4, p. 319.
[9] *Ibid.*, t. 4, p. 322.
[10] *Ibid.*, t. 4, p. 318.

these two bodies of evidence Comte proposes to reconstruct the course of human development. His justification of this procedure is based upon three assumptions or presuppositions. First, the successive modifications which constitute the 'forward march of humanity' are always slow, gradual, and continuous. Second, these modifications follow invariably an order which is fixed and determined. Third, the differences between groups are due to the inequality in the speed (*vitesse*) with which they pass through the consecutive stages.[11]

These assumptions have important implications. In the first place, each and every group will, in the course of time, pass through the entire series of steps or stages which has marked the development of mankind as a whole. At any given moment, then, every existing group will be in a definite stage, the relative position of which may be determined by reference to the general scheme of development. In the second place, human development being uniform, the development of all the different aspects of human activity will be concurrent and uniform. We may, therefore, facilitate inquiry by subjecting the totality of social phenomena to a process of analytical decomposition ('à une décomposition rationelle permanente'). In other words, we may follow the general movement of human development by restricting attention and observation to any one of the different elementary aspects of human existence—physical, moral, intellectual, political—abstraction being made of all the others.[12] In the third place, the development of each separate art, institution, custom, and mode of thought will follow the same series of steps in every group. Hence, in the investigation of human progress, we may restrict inquiry to the development of the most advanced nations, the *élite* or vanguard of humanity, the population of western Europe,[13] and, within

11 Auguste Comte, as cited, t. 4, pp. 285, 320.
12 *Ibid.*, t. 4, pp. 267, 459.
13 *Ibid.*, t. 5, p. 7.

this field, we may limit ourselves to the single element of intellectual development.[14]

One other point in Comte's exposition of the comparative method must be mentioned. He accounts for the similarities in the customs, institutions, arts, and ideas of peoples widely separated in time and place on the assumption that the course of human development is uniform in the midst of all diversities of climate and of race.[15] It might have been expected that Comte would have attempted to verify or establish this point of view by examination of the facts. He supports his assumption of uniform development, however, not by direct investigation, but by appeal to what he terms the invariability of human nature. In his opinion, human characteristics, physical, moral, and intellectual, are essentially the same at every step of the ladder of progress.[16] The course of development is uniform, because the working of the human mind is always uniform.

As a result of the foregoing observations on Comte's mode of procedure we are in a position to see that his 'social physics' or sociology includes two distinct types of inquiry.

In the first of these, he envisages a science which would stand in the same relation to the social as anatomy and physiology to the physical body. Now, if used merely for the purpose of illustration, this parallel may serve to indicate the aim of one phase of the study of society. Unfortunately, from the time of Hobbes the 'biological analogy' between the human body and the body politic has proved strangely attractive to humanists, and, following Comte, men such as Spencer, Lilienfeld, Schaeffle, and Worms have in turn devoted themselves to enumerating likenesses and to discovering what appeared to them to be identities between biological organisms and social organizations. As a result, it has become an established convention among sociologists to express

[14] Auguste Comte, as cited, t. 4, pp. 268, 328, 458.
[15] *Ibid.*, t. 4, pp. 318-319.
[16] *Ibid.*, t. 4, p. 343.

their ideas in biological metaphors, and to describe and interpret social relations in terms of a pseudo-biological symbolism. More recently, however, sociologists have in a measure succeeded in liberating themselves from these verbal entanglements, and in recognizing what was originally valuable in the comparison of the organic body and the social group. It is now generally understood that, just as anatomy and physiology investigate the forms and modes of working of the constituent elements of living bodies, sociology may investigate the structure and working of the elements of social organizations. "The central line in the path of methodological progress in sociology is marked by the gradual shifting of effort from analogical representation of social structures to real analysis of social processes."[17] In other words, later inquirers, getting rid of Comte's misleading analogies, by an expenditure of much time and effort, have come to see that one aspect of a science of society will be the investigation of how society is constituted; but whether this inquiry can be successfully conducted by following the procedure of the eighteenth century is a matter which admits of grave doubt.[18]

In the second place, Comte identifies the scientific study of 'social dynamics' with the theory of progress and the construction of 'ideal series.'

In considering this aspect of his work, it is of importance to note Comte's dependence upon older modes of thought. Thus, so little was he influenced by the new scientific ideas of his time that he accepted Bossuet's *Discourse on Universal History* as a model, 'un imposant modèle,' for the statement of the final results of his social dynamics.[19] Having accepted the form of Bossuet's *Discourse*, Comte followed Turgot in substituting 'l'idée mère' of continuous progress for Bossuet's doctrine of providence.[20] He assumed that

[17] A. W. Small, *General Sociology* (Chicago [1905]), p. ix.
[18] *Cf.* J. S. Mill, *Logic*, Bk. VI, ch. x, § 7.
[19] Auguste Comte, as cited, t. 4, pp. 204-205; t. 5, p. 8.
[20] *Ibid.*, t. 4, p. 262.

progress is a necessary product of the slow, gradual, continuous accumulation of successive modifications.[21] These modifications, which, in his opinion, have definite limits,[22] always follow in a fixed and determined order,[23] which is the same for the race as a whole, for all peoples, however distant and independent, and for the individual.[24] Since these modifications always follow in the same order, the primary object of inquiry, Comte thought, will be to trace the fixed and necessary steps in the continuous succession of human development. Comte's dependence upon eighteenth-century thought is revealed in an interesting manner at this point in his exposition. He proceeds to make what he describes as 'an indispensable scientific abstraction.' For clearness, he says, it is of importance to set up, following the 'happy artifice' of Condorcet, the hypothesis or rational fiction of a unique people to which we may refer ideally all the consecutive social modifications which are to be observed among different human groups.[25] One cannot imagine, he says, any *nuance* or shade of variation in human evolution which is not now to be found somewhere on the earth's surface.[26] The task of social dynamics is to coördinate these variations into one ideal series which will include all the successive steps in human development. In Comte's view, this fiction of a unique social series is analogous, first, to the life cycle of the individual, and, second, to the 'fundamental organic series,' the entire series of the forms of life as represented in the biological hierarchy. Any possible doubt as to his meaning, it may be said, is removed when, following Pascal,[27] he represents the human species, past, present, and future, as constituting an immense and eternal social unity, of which the different individual and national elements, joined together by an inti-

[21] Auguste Comte, as cited, t. 4, pp. 265, 278.
[22] *Ibid.*, t. 4, p. 285.
[23] *Ibid.*, t. 4, pp. 266-268.
[24] *Ibid.*, t. 4, p. 446.
[25] *Ibid.*, t. 4, p. 263.
[26] *Ibid.*, t. 4, pp. 317-318.
[27] *Ibid.*, t. 4, p. 293.

mate and universal solidarity, contribute, each in its own way, to the development of humanity. With this analogy in mind, Comte proceeds to discuss the general direction, the rate, and the necessary order of human progress. This leads him to the definition of 'la grande loi philosophique' of the three successive states—theological, metaphysical, and positive—through which, in his view, knowledge passes in dealing with every type of speculation or inquiry.[28]

It was Comte's main contention that his procedure advanced the study of society to the positive or scientific plane. His adoption of the 'rational fiction' of Pascal and Condorcet would seem to indicate that what he actually accomplished was to establish the 'dynamic' phase of sociology in the 'theological' state, since he himself describes this state as one in which "free play is given to spontaneous fictions admitting of no proof."[29]

Comte's identification of social dynamics with the study of progress, and with the construction of 'ideal series,' has had two results. In the first place, his procedure has been accepted without question by sociologists as representing an essential aspect of the study of society, and as being in accordance with the method of 'natural science.' In the second place, his procedure has been unhesitatingly rejected by historians, and has led them to oppose the whole idea of introducing scientific method—that is, Comte's conception of scientific method—in the field of humanistic study.

The reason for the opposition of historians to Comte's procedure is not far to seek. Comte asserts that the employment of the 'historical method' gives to sociology its distinctive philosophical character,[30] but what he means by 'historical method' is entirely distinct from its meaning for

[28] Auguste Comte, as cited, t. 4, p. 463.

[29] Auguste Comte, *Système de politique positive* (4e éd., Paris, 1912), t. 1, p. 33. *Cf.* W. R. Inge, *Outspoken Essays,* 2d series (London, 1922), p. 171.

[30] Auguste Comte, *Cours de philosophie positive* (4e éd., Paris, 1877), t. 4, p. 323.

historians. In Comte's view, history, in order to be scientific, must be abstract; in order to pass from the concrete to the abstract state it must be cleared of all particular circumstances,[31] and, ideally, even of the names of men and of peoples.[32] For Comte, the 'events' upon which academic history lays stress are to be regarded as 'essentially insignificant,' and as comparable to 'monstrosities' in biology.[33] It follows, therefore, that since history, identified with Comte's 'historical method,' represents the method of 'natural science,' history, as the study of events, must fall outside the domain of 'natural science.' We have already seen, however, that this is precisely the conclusion of modern logic. What is here to be observed is that both historians and sociologists have been willing to concur in this judgment, and to accept the conclusion that logic has 'justified' this distinction between the two subjects.[34] On the other hand, as has previously been remarked, logic cannot 'justify'—its business is to describe—the different modes of procedure followed in the pursuit of knowledge. It follows, therefore, that the judgment of the logicians is simply a late reflection of the situation created by Comte's identification of scientific work in the historical field with the construction of 'ideal series.'

So far, then, as the present argument is concerned, it will be evident that Comte's formulation of the method of 'social dynamics' has had the result of contributing in an important manner to the perpetuation, in the nineteenth century, of the eighteenth-century separation between the study of 'events' and the study of change in the course of time.

[31] August Comte, as cited, t. 5, p. 17.
[32] *Ibid.*, t. 5, p. 14.
[33] *Ibid.*, t. 5, p. 12.
[34] *Cf.* R. E. Park and E. W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (Chicago, 1921), pp. 6-12.

CHAPTER 10

THE INFLUENCE OF COMTE ON THE STUDY OF ANTHROPOLOGY

THE influence of Comte's perpetuation of the separation between the study of events and the study of change in the course of time is to be observed, not only in the subject designated 'sociology,' but in the methodological discussions which have been so conspicuous a feature of the literature of anthropology and ethnology in recent years. A consideration of the movement of thought in this field, however, will bring to light the significant fact that, notwithstanding the tenacious adherence of anthropologists, in the nineteenth century, to the use of the comparative method, they have, more recently, been led to recognize the necessity of taking historical events into account in the study of change. While historians have concentrated attention on the study of situations and events, anthropologists have concerned themselves primarily with the study of conditions and of change. In the pursuit of these interests, they have come to realize that the conception, here identified with the thought of the eighteenth century and with the system of Comte, that the study of change may be carried on without reference to the influence of historical events, constitutes an obstacle of the most serious description to the advancement of the study of man. The more recent emphasis on the influence of historical events in the study of anthropology will, therefore, be recognized as of particular importance for the present discussion.

It has recently been suggested that "the birth of anthropology followed almost immediately the promulgation of the evolution theory by Darwin and Wallace in 1858."[1] The

[1] Sir J. G. Frazer, "The Scope and Method of Mental Anthropology," *Science Progress,* 16 (1922), p. 581. *Cf.* Franz Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (New York, 1911), p. 175. P. A. Means, *Racial Factors in Democracy* (Boston, 1918), p. 7. R. R. Marett, *Psychology and Folk-lore* (New York, 1920), p. 102. Also identified with the work of Herbert Spencer: A. A. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization* (New York, 1922), pp. 21-23.

continued repetition of this statement makes it necessary to point out that Darwin's first book appeared just too late to have an effect upon the remarkable development of ethnological study in the second half of the nineteenth century. The notable works which initiate this movement in ethnology were published to all intents and purposes contemporaneously with the *Origin of Species*. The distinctive contributions of Waitz, Bastian, and Bachofen, of Maine, McLennan, and Tylor, all appeared between 1859 and 1865. The significance of this fact is made clear when we find Tylor, in 1873, and McLennan, in 1876, disclaiming dependence upon Darwin, and maintaining their allegiance to an earlier tradition of development or evolution.[2] The concept of 'evolution' in ethnology is, in fact, distinct from the type of evolutionary study represented in Darwin's writings. In the pre-Darwinian tradition, the term 'evolution' is synonymous with 'development,' and is intimately associated with the doctrine of the fixity of species. Ethnology has followed Comte in regarding the study of 'evolution' as concerned with tracing the course of development of mankind, and with the construction of 'ideal series.'[3]

Comte's influence upon ethnology appears, then, in the wide acceptance of his idea that the aim of evolutionary study is the construction of generalized or theoretical histories. It appears equally, on the other hand, in the reiterated opposition to his theory of the uniformity of human development; indeed, since his time, this opposition has been one of the most constant characteristics of ethnological literature. In 1859, Waitz argued that any attempt to give an outline of 'the natural history of human society' could lead to nothing but 'the so-called philosophy of history.' His own

[2] E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. 1 (3d ed., London, 1891), p. vii. J. F. McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History* (new ed., London, 1886), p. xv. *Cf.* Frederick Pollock, *Essays in Jurisprudence and Ethics* (London, 1882), pp. 366-367. A. W. Benn, *The History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 2 (London, 1906), p. 460.

[3] Note Tylor's references to Comte: *Primitive Culture*, as cited, i, 19, 477; ii, 144, 242, 354.

inquiries proved, he said, that differences in the culture of peoples depend, in the main, upon change in the general conditions of life, and upon the vicissitudes of history. Powerful impulses are, he believed, always required to change existing conditions.[4] In the same year Latham, as a result of his survey of the races of mankind, expressed the view that civilization or advancement was "a result of the contact of more peoples than one."[5] In 1861, Sir Henry Maine published his *Ancient Law*. While an explicit statement of his views on the uniformity of development was not made until 1883, it may be presumed that these views are implicit in his first work. It is of interest, therefore, to find him saying, in opposition to McLennan, that "there has been room . . . for many courses of modification and development, each proceeding within its own area. So far as I am aware," he continues, "there is nothing in the recorded history of society to justify the belief that, during the vast chapter of its growth which is wholly unwritten, the same transformations of social constitution succeeded one another everywhere, uniformly if not simultaneously."[6] In 1863, there appeared Taine's *Histoire de la littérature anglaise*. In giving reasons for his choice of this subject, Taine (who was one of the foremost exponents of 'positivism' in France) presented the consideration that there is a peculiarity in the civilization of England: apart from its spontaneous development, he said, it presents a forced deviation due to the Norman Conquest. In it, therefore, we may, he thought, examine the two most powerful influences in human transformations —nature (*i.e.*, climate and race) and constraint.[7]

With the year 1865 we come to the first of the works of Sir Edward Burnett Tylor, his *Researches into the Early*

[4] Theodor Waitz, *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, I. Th. (2 Aufl., Leipzig, 1877), p. 473.

[5] R. G. Latham, *Descriptive Ethnology*, vol. 2 (London, 1859), p. 502.

[6] Sir H. S. Maine, *Dissertations on Early Law and Custom* (London, 1883), pp. 218-219.

[7] Henri Taine, *Histoire de la littérature anglaise*, t. 1 (2e éd., Paris, 1866), pp. xlviii-xlix.

History of Mankind. At this point it will be well to recall that the comparative method had its origin in the perception of *similarities* in the manners and customs, arts and ideas, of peoples widely separated in place and time. Comte's theory of uniformity is based upon the comparison of similarities, and this orientation of thought has been retained in ethnology down to the present. How this point of view, when accepted without reservation, may affect inquiry appears in the statement of McLennan that he had found such similarity among races usually considered distinct that he regarded the ethnological differences of the several families of mankind as of little or no weight compared with what they had in common.[8] Few writers have followed McLennan in the completeness of his adherence to Comte in this particular, but many have adopted the practice of Lord Avebury, whose *Origin of Civilisation* (1870) is simply a compendium of illustrations of "the remarkable similarities between different races."[9] Now the particular interest of Tylor's first book lies in the fact that in it he made the problem of *similarity* the subject of a sustained critical inquiry. In his view, similarity "sometimes may be ascribed to the like working of men's minds under like conditions, and sometimes it is a proof of blood relationship or of intercourse, direct or indirect, between the races among whom it is found."[10] The aim of the *Researches* is to arrive at a technique of investigation for determining in what cases similarity may be used as evidence for the reconstruction of the early history of mankind. In the case of any particular custom which is found in two distant places, Tylor reasoned that if it appears likely that a similar state of things may have produced it more than once, then the similarity discovered cannot be used as

[8] J. F. McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History* (new ed., London, 1886), p. xvii.

[9] Lord Avebury, *The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man* (6th ed., London, 1902), p. 11.

[10] E. B. Tylor, *Researches Into the Early History of Mankind and the Development of Civilization* (2d ed., London, 1870), p. 5; *cf.* pp. 175, 376-379.

historical evidence of connection between the two groups; if, on the other hand, it appears impossible that such a thing should have grown up independently in the places where it is found, then the similarity becomes evidence for historical connection.[11] The entire book is devoted to the analysis of cases of similarity with a view to sorting out those which may be utilized for establishing connections between groups in the past; Tylor's interest is in discovering cases of similarity which are only to be accounted for by transmission, by diffusion from a common center, by propagation from district to district. In this work we have the first systematic contribution to a subject which has occupied a central position in recent ethnological inquiry.

The ethnologist who is to deal critically with similarities must, Tylor thought, have "a general notion of what man does and does not do";[12] consequently, in his second book, *Primitive Culture* (1871), he turns to "the investigation of the laws of human nature."[13] Now in this, his most widely read work, the influence of Comte is apparent throughout, and in a manner which is not evident in the *Researches*. It should be observed, nevertheless, that here also Tylor keeps before him the importance of the historical aspect of similarity. He points out that, in dealing with the elements of culture, the ethnologist will consider such details "with a view to making out their distribution in geography and history, and the relation which exists among them," and he suggests a 'working analogy' between the diffusion of plants and animals and the diffusion of civilization.[14] The specific problem which, however, he sets himself is that of "determining the relation of the mental condition of savages to that of civilized men."[15]

[11] E. B. Tylor, as cited, p. 275.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 275.
[13] E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, as cited, vol. 1, p. 3.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 8; *cf.* pp. 9, 35, 39, 53, *etc.*
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Tylor's work, as a whole, presents certain points of interest which may be briefly summarized. It inherits from the eighteenth century the point of view which places similarity in the foreground. It inherits from earlier English anthropology a strong realization of the importance of the contact of peoples and of the diffusion of culture-elements in the advancement of civilization. It shows the characteristic critical attitude which later ethnological discussion has taken in opposition to Comte's assumption of uniformity, and points out, by contrast, that there are three ways to explain "how any particular piece of skill or knowledge has come into any particular place where it is found . . . independent invention, inheritance from ancestors in a distant region, transmission from one race to another."[16] It takes over from Comte, and transmits to English ethnology, a definite interest in the psychological analysis of primitive or savage culture with the object of determining the characteristic traits of primitive modes of thought. We find thus established in the main current of ethnological literature two distinct lines of inquiry, which may, for convenience, be distinguished as the 'psychology' and the 'history' of primitive man. A brief consideration of the later development of these inquiries will bring out certain points of interest in the present discussion.

The argument which has led one group of English ethnologists to lay stress upon the study of primitive psychology appears, in 1884, in Andrew Lang's *Custom and Myth.* In this book there is no lack of appreciation of the importance of diffusion, borrowing, contact, and migration in accounting for similarities. What, however, Lang sets before himself as a definite object of inquiry is "the study of the mental condition of savages," and the investigation of "the common simple ideas" of humanity.[17] This point of view has been maintained by a group of scholars, of which the most

[16] E. B. Tylor, *Researches,* as cited, p. 376.
[17] Andrew Lang, *Custom and Myth* (2d ed., London, 1885), pp. 9, 20.

widely known members, in addition to Andrew Lang, are Sir J. G. Frazer and E. S. Hartland.

The point of departure of these men is the observed fact of similarity. "No one," Mr. Hartland remarks, "can study the habits of mankind, the processes of thought and the institutions of savage races without being deeply impressed with the unity which underlies all diversities."[18] With this background, the specific aim of inquiry is to determine the mental characteristics and modes of thought of the 'simpler' peoples, of the 'backward' elements in the human population of the globe, and, in the last analysis, to make a comparative study of the mind of man.[19] Such an examination of how primitive man thinks is not to be confused with inquiry into historical origins, or into historical connections between distant peoples in order to account for similarities in particular elements of culture. The two types of study have different aims, and must necessarily make different use of common materials. However designated—Social Psychology, Mental Anthropology, Völkerpsychologie—we have here a fundamental study[20] which has a service to perform which is distinct from the investigation of the 'history' of early man. We are not here concerned with the question whether this plan of inquiry has been successfully prosecuted further than to remark that its exponents have left themselves open

[18] E. S. Hartland, *Mythology and Folk Tales: Their Relation and Interpretation* (2d ed., London, 1914), p. 32.

[19] Sir J. G. Frazer, as cited, p. 585.

[20] *Cf.* Herbert Spencer, "Primitive Ideas," in his *Principles of Sociology,* vol. 1 (London, 1876), chs. 8-16. Andrew Lang, "The Mental Condition of Savages," in his *Myth, Ritual, and Religion,* vol. 1 (London, 1887), chs. 3-4. E. S. Hartland, "Savage Ideas," in his *Science of Fairy Tales* (London, 1891), ch. 2. Franz Boas, "Some Traits of Primitive Culture," in his *Mind of Primitive Man* (New York, 1911), ch. 8. Wilhelm Wundt, *Elements of Folk Psychology,* tr. by E. L. Schaub (London, 1916). Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *La mentalité primitive* (Paris, 1922); *Primitive Mentality,* tr. by L. A. Clare (New York [1923]). A. A. Goldenweiser, "The Ideas of Early Man," in his *Early Civilization* (New York, 1922), pp. 327-415. Richard Thurnwald, *Psychologie des primitiven Menschen,* in Gustav Kafka, ed., *Handbuch der vergleichenden Psychologie,* Bd. I, Abt. 2 (München [1922]).

to criticism from the tendency, evident in their writings, to follow Comte in presenting their results under the form of "a philosophy of primæval history."[21]

The study of the 'history' of primitive man has various aspects. Comte, as we have seen, regarded the reconstruction of the stages in a single line of development of humanity as the principal aim of scientific inquiry in the field of 'social dynamics.' Since his time, ethnologists and sociologists have exhausted ingenuity in the attempt to arrive at a system of classification which would exhibit the different peoples of the earth, past and present, in a fixed and determined order. This activity has also given rise to a large number of works in which human development is described in terms of religion, art, marriage, property, government, and other single aspects of culture. Pitt-Rivers, for example, devoted himself, in Comte's spirit, to establishing 'series' of objects with a view to tracing the stages in the evolution of the material arts of mankind, and his object was "by this means to provide really reliable materials for a philosophy of progress."[22] Following Comte again, the view has been maintained that these generalized presentations are to be regarded as 'scientific history.' "Only when treated in this way," Westermarck stated, "can history lay claim to the rank and honour of a science in the highest sense of the term, as forming an important branch of sociology."[23]

The more immediate interest of ethnology in this type of inquiry arises from the fact that any conception of history involves the determination of a point of departure or of a beginning. In academic history, as we have seen, the beginning is a situation in human affairs identified by reference to a given time and place. In Comte's system, on the other hand, scientific history is history cleared of reference to spe-

[21] E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture,* as cited, vol. 1, p. 25.

[22] A. Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers, *The Evolution of Culture, and Other Essays,* ed. by J. L. Myres (Oxford, 1906), p. 10.

[23] Edward Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage* (London, 1891), p. 1.

cific names and dates. Stages of development are not defined in terms of years, they represent a sequence which is conceptual and ideal, not chronological. It follows that the attempt to construct an 'ideal series,' to exhibit the course of development or 'evolution' of any phase of human activity, must begin, not with a point in time and a position in space, but with a *theory of origins*. Comte himself was aware of the danger incident to this mode of procedure. He pointed out, first, that the earliest stages of development are to be determined only by the analysis of existing societies, and, second, that, where the actual historical data are not available for purposes of verification, the analysis of existing societies must lead inevitably to erroneous notions as to the order of succession of social states. It is agreed on all sides that actual historical knowledge of 'origins' is not to be looked for, yet speculation as to 'origins' is accepted as one of the essential features of ethnological inquiry.[24] With such speculations a great part of all works on the 'origin and development' or the 'evolution' of arts, institutions, and ideas is taken up, and one of the most persistently debated points in current ethnological discussions is how we are to proceed, through the use of inference and analogy, in the reconstruction of 'history' for which no historical evidence is available.

To give an example of the difficulties which have arisen as a result of the desire to reach back to beginnings, we may instance the procedure which seeks for 'absolute' or psychological, in default of historical, origins. In the middle of the nineteenth century there was much discussion in regard to the irrational and unnatural element in myths and folk-tales. The prevailing theory in explanation of this phenomenon, expounded in England by Max Müller and Sir George Cox, was based upon the etymological analysis of mythical

[24] In criticism of speculation as to origins, *cf.* W. G. Sumner, *Folkways* (Boston, 1906), pp. 7-8. G. L. Gomme, *Folklore As an Historical Science* (London, 1908), pp. 225-226. A. R. Brown, *The Andaman Islanders* (Cambridge, 1922), p. 229, n. 1.

names. The most vigorous opponent of this philological school was Andrew Lang. The theory which he urged was that the origin of the irrational element in myth and tale was to be found in the qualities of the uncivilized imagination, that this feature was "derived and inherited from the savage state of man, from the savage conditions of life, and the savage way of regarding the world."[25] The proof which Lang offered of this theory was his demonstration that there existed an actual and historical state of mind, or condition of the human intellect, "in which things seemed natural and rational that now appear unnatural and devoid of reason, and in which, if myths were evolved, they would, if they survived into civilization, be such as civilized men would find strange and perplexing."[26] In its immediate setting, as an explanation of the presence of a particular element in myth, this theory is unambiguous. The theory implied, however, is that a state of mind might be considered as the origin of a particular element in culture,[27] and hence that the study of beginnings might be pursued without reference to historical evidence. As a device for recovering origins in the absence of actual information, this procedure has commended itself to a large number of ethnologists. Thus Henry Balfour is of the opinion that, although the 'true history' of the growth of decorative art is lost and can never be written, we may, nevertheless, arrive at conclusions as to how patterns and designs have grown up from earlier stages, and in some cases trace their evolution back to their 'absolute' origin.[28] Westermarck thinks that "the difficulties in finding the ultimate psychological origins of ceremonies are frequently in-

[25] Andrew Lang, "Introduction," in *Grimm's Household Tales,* tr. by Margaret Hunt [1884] (London, 1901), pp. xli, xliii. *Cf.* J. A. Farrer, *Primitive Manners and Customs* (London, 1879), pp. 257, 281.

[26] Andrew Lang, *Myth, Ritual, and Religion* [1887], vol. 1 (London, 1913), pp. 32-33.

[27] *Ibid.,* p. 8.

[28] Henry Balfour, *The Evolution of Decorative Art* (London, 1893), p. 17.

creased by the obscurity of their historical origins,"[29] but Crawley holds to the view that "all study of the origins of social institutions must be based on what ethnology can teach us of the psychology of the lower races."[30]

It must not be overlooked that many ethnologists interested in the 'history' of culture have maintained that the problem of diffusion is "of prior urgency to that of origins."[31] The study of diffusion represents a characteristic phase of the ethnological investigation of the history of mankind. It constitutes, as we have seen, the subject-matter of Tylor's *Researches*, and is one of the foremost interests of ethnology at the present time. The aim of this type of inquiry is the reconstruction of the actual lines followed in the geographical distribution of single or of multiple elements of culture from area to area in the course of time. Now the fact is that the study of the geographical distribution of culture-elements has been one of the most distinctive results, in every branch of humanistic investigation, of the introduction of the comparative method. Thus the history of religion, in one important aspect, is the study of the geographical spread or diffusion of Buddhism, Mithraism, Christianity, and other 'world' faiths. The history of literature is similarly concerned with the influence of Greek and Latin, Hebrew and Arabic writers upon medieval and modern Europe, and with the relations of the various literatures of Europe to each other during the modern period. The histories of art, philosophy, and science have similar interests. Whether, in short, we consider language or mythology, symbols or designs, alphabets or systems of counting, weapons or modes of transport, the domestication of animals or the cultivation of cereals, clothing or types of dwellings, megalithic monuments or the practice of mummification, there is scarcely an

[29] Edward Westermarck, *Marriage Ceremonies in Morocco* (London, 1914), p. 9.

[30] Ernest Crawley, *The Mystic Rose; A Study of Primitive Marriage* (London, 1902), p. 1.

[31] Joseph Jacobs, *Folk-lore*, 2 (1891), p. 125.

element of culture which has not been made the subject of investigation from the point of view of its geographical distribution and of its diffusion in time. This type of activity is the direct result of the concentration of attention upon the study of similarities.[32]

There is still another aspect of the 'ethnological study of history' which must be considered. Instead of following Comte in the attempt to support an *a priori* philosophy of history, instead of attempting to reach back to origins through the avenue of speculation, instead of attempting to account for geographical discontinuities in the distribution of specific elements of culture, the ethnologist may undertake an analysis of the *present condition* of culture in a given region in terms of historical perspective. Now the interest of this mode of approach is that when analysis is made of the culture of a given area, taking the history of the area into consideration, it will be found at once that the present status of the culture submitted to examination cannot possibly be explained on the basis of the assumption that any given condition was the outcome of a slow, gradual, continuous modification through a series of fixed and determined stages. In every instance it will be found that the 'ideal' course of development has been interfered with by cultural intrusions from other areas. It will be found that there is no 'ideal' or fixed and determined course of development at all. It will be found, in short, that the eighteenth-century separation between the study of history and the study of change in time, a separation which is crystallized in Comte's system, cannot be maintained.

The application of the historical analysis of culture in criticism of current theories of uniformity of development appears in the work of Sir Arthur Mitchell, whose book,

[32] For recent discussions of 'diffusion,' see: A. A. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization* (New York, 1922), pp. 301-324. R. H. Lowie, *Primitive Society* (New York, 1922), see index under 'Diffusion.' A. L. Kroeber, *Anthropology* (New York [1923]), ch. 8. Clark Wissler, *Man and Culture* (New York [1923]), chs. 8, 9.

The Past in the Present, representing lectures delivered in 1876 and 1878, was published in 1880. On the basis of a study of culture in Scotland, Mitchell arrived at the conclusion that it seemed "highly improbable, if not altogether absurd, that the human mind, at some particular stage of its development, should, here, there, and everywhere—independently, and as the result of reaching that stage—discover that an alloy of copper and tin yields a hard metal, useful in the manufacture of tools and weapons."[33] Our knowledge of what is happening, and of what has happened, he believed, must lead to the inference that "no man in isolation can become civilized,"[34] that progress is not so much the result of independent discoveries or inventions as the outcome of communications by one society to another.[35] It is of importance to notice that Mitchell maintains that the investigation of human advancement must be based upon the separate examination of the antiquities of each country.[36]

The most devoted advocate of the historical study of ethnology has been Sir George Laurence Gomme. The point of departure of Gomme's work is that "all studies of this kind must begin from the standpoint of a definite culture area."[37] He questioned the manner in which ethnologists occupied themselves chiefly with the study of some one element of culture, such as animism, bride-capture, or totemism; he criticised the practice by which investigators subtracted a particular custom of one tribe to compare it with an apparently similar custom subtracted from another without taking into consideration the place this custom occupied in the culture of the respective peoples.[38] He called attention to the danger, illustrated in Frazer's researches, of search-

[33] Arthur Mitchell, *The Past in the Present* (Edinburgh, 1880), p. 114.
[34] *Ibid.,* p. 186.
[35] *Ibid.,* p. 196.
[36] *Ibid.,* p. 114.
[37] G. L. Gomme, *Folklore As an Historical Science* (London, 1908), p. xxi, *cf.* p. 365.
[38] G. L. Gomme, "Recent Research on Institutions," *Folk-lore,* 2 (1891), p. 486.

ing for a general system of belief and worship from the beliefs and rites of peoples not ethnically, geographically, or politically connected.[39] He insisted that the object of inquiry should be the culture "of whole human groups rather than that of particular sections of each human group, of the whole corpus of social, religious, and economic elements residing in each human group rather than that of separated items."[40] He took exception to the habitual practice of academic historians in ignoring the backward and emphasizing exclusively the advanced parts of nations.[41] Gomme's constructive aim, throughout his writings, was to demonstrate the presence, in English civilization, of different culture layers or strata associated with a succession of intrusions of races (Iberic, Celtic, and Teutonic), and of culture-elements (in particular, Christianity). Further, he sought to analyze the ways in which such intrusions had affected the earlier cultures with which they came in contact, and the ways in which the submerged or arrested culture-elements of the older inhabitants maintained an existence.[42]

In Gomme's hands the comparative method underwent a distinct modification. He utilized comparison, not to identify similarities, but to determine what is to be looked for in the study of the culture of a particular area. He saw clearly that the history of English culture, or rather of culture in England, would be unintelligible without a knowledge of the history of culture in other areas. He saw that the study of any one culture must be carried on in the light of the available body of anthropological knowledge. The essence of his theoretical point of view is that the study of human evolution must be based upon the comparison of group with group.[43] On the other hand, the final aim of his own endeavors was simply the filling out and extension of the

[39] G. L. Gomme, *Folklore As an Historical Science,* p. 110.
[40] *Ibid.,* p. 234.
[41] G. L. Gomme, *Ethnology in Folklore* (London, 1892), p. 3.
[42] *Ibid.,* pp. 7, 12, 13, 41, *etc.*
[43] G. L. Gomme, *Folk-lore,* 2 (1891), p. 487.

knowledge of English history; he defended his own activities with the argument that "every nation has the right to go back as far in its history as it is possible to reach."[44]

The type of analysis which Gomme applied to English culture might, he thought, be extended to that of the Zulus or any other backward people. In 1890, he expressed the opinion that the difficulties of such an undertaking would be enormous, and the profitable result but small.[45] By 1908, however, he had reached the conclusion that it is a mistake to suppose "that survivals can only be studied when they are embedded in a high civilization. It is almost a more fruitful method," he thought, "to study them as they appear in the lower strata," as, for example, among the Australian aborigines.[46] Since that time, indeed, Gomme's general point of view has had wide application in the study of backward groups, and Dr. Rivers has given the designation of 'historical method' to the analysis of an existing culture, basing his investigations on the presupposition that similarities are due, in the main, if not wholly, to the spread of customs and institutions from some one center in which local conditions especially favored their development.[47] If, as has been said, "some of the theories which Gomme formulated were bound

[44] G. L. Gomme, *Folklore As an Historical Science,* p. 179; *Primitive Folk-moots* (London, 1880), p. 3.

[45] G. L. Gomme, *Handbook of Folklore* (London, 1890), p. 4.

[46] G. L. Gomme, *Folklore As an Historical Science,* p. 156.

[47] W. H. R. Rivers, *History and Ethnology* (London, 1922), p. 5; for additional references, see his 'Bibliography,' pp. 30-32.

In concluding his paper, Rivers remarked: "It is interesting to note how closely the views here put forward concerning the nature of ethnological research agree with those of the late Professor Maitland, especially as expressed in his paper on 'The Body Politic.' In that essay Maitland stated his belief that 'by and by anthropology will have the choice between being history and being nothing'" (p. 29). Maitland's aphorism, however, is purely sporadic, and does not apply to the type of research advocated by Rivers. He was simply reiterating the old opposition to Comte's theory of ideal series. *Cf.* his *Domesday Book and Beyond* (Cambridge, 1897), pp. 345-346; *Township and Borough* (Cambridge, 1898), pp. 24-25; "The body politic," in his *Collected Papers,* ed. by H. A. L. Fisher, vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1911), pp. 294-297.

Cf. also Edward Sapir, *Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture, a Study in Method* (Ottawa, 1916).

to be open to question, because of the uncertainty as to the exact meaning of the materials on which they were based, and the absence of full proof of the racial intercourse on which he laid stress,"[48] it is obvious that this criticism would apply with added force to the analysis of a culture, such as that of Melanesia, for which no corroborative documentary or archæological evidence was available.

In the foregoing pages the work of English scholars has been dealt with, not because it is assumed to be of greater importance than that of their contemporaries in other countries, but because it illustrates the points under discussion in a readily accessible body of literature. As manifested in current literature, the differences between ethnologists are most frequently expressed in terms of an antithesis, as in England, between the 'evolutionary theory' attributed to Tylor and theories of 'diffusion' as advanced, in recent years, by Rivers and G. E. Smith. In Germany, the same antithesis has given rise to the opinion that a new method in ethnological inquiry had been introduced by Friedrich Ratzel.[49] The background of Ratzel's departure is represented by the work of Adolf Bastian, who, adopting Comte's system as a basis, devoted himself, from 1860 onwards, to the exposition of the 'psychic unity' of mankind. In opposition to Bastian, Ratzel maintained that similarities in the culture of peoples, however distant, are to be attributed exclusively to the dissemination of culture-elements from specific centers of invention. It will be seen, as a result of what has already been said, that the school of Ratzel is particularized, not by the introduction of a new method, but by an exclusive attention to and hence a marked elaboration of the mode of explaining similarities by 'diffusion.' What is involved in each of these contrasts (English and German) is simply the old opposition to

[48] Edward Clodd, *Folk-lore,* 27 (1916), p. 112.

[49] For discussion of the modern development of ethnology from the point of view of German scholarship, see F. Graebner, "Geschichte der Ethnologie," in *Die Kultur der Gegenwart,* III. Teil, V. Abt., *Anthropologie* (Leipzig & Berlin, 1923), pp. 438-447.

Comte's 'uniformity of development.' It has been pointed out earlier that Tylor devoted his first book to the investigation of 'diffusion,' and that he maintained the view that, while in some cases similarity might be attributed to the like working of men's minds under like conditions, in other cases similarity was proof of an historical connection between the groups among which it is found. In recent years marked emphasis has been placed on the second mode of explaining similarities, but no evidence has been brought forward to invalidate Tylor's argument that similarity is sometimes due to 'psychic unity.'

We are now in a position to see that the differences between ethnologists at the present time are fully comprehensible only in the light of certain presuppositions and assumptions accepted in the eighteenth century and transmitted to more recent times through the work of Auguste Comte. Thus it has been pointed out that Comte assumed the aim of scientific inquiry in the field of 'social dynamics' to be the construction of 'ideal series,' representing what he considered the steps or stages in the 'natural order' of human development. In furtherance of this aim, he took over and formulated the procedure to be followed in the 'comparative method.' As employed in the eighteenth century, and as described by Comte, the comparative method rests upon the comparison of similarities. Hence the problem which has presented itself insistently is how we are to account for similarities in the culture of peoples remote from each other in place and time. Reduced to this form, the problem calls for concentration of attention upon the study of the distribution of particular culture-elements. This restriction or narrowing of inquiry may be illustrated from Tylor's *Researches*. In his investigation of similarity, Tylor supported his argument in favor of historical connection by instancing the occurrence of specific similarities in different areas. What is to be observed, in these cases, is an unconscious transference of attention from the groups in which

the similarity is exhibited to specific culture-elements and their geographical diffusion. The result of this inadvertence has been the introduction of an undesigned opposition between elements which are not on the same footing, namely, the development or evolution of groups and the distribution of specific arts and customs. Now there is no actual basis for opposition between the historical study of the culture of an area and the geographical study of the spread of particular culture-elements in the course of time. The two studies are separate aspects of ethnological inquiry, but, it is important to realize, the two studies are distinct. When carried out, inquiry into the distribution of culture-elements may account for the presence of the horse, the composite bow, the cultivation of maize in given areas, but it cannot show how the present condition of backward or advanced groups has come to be as it is. Civilization is not merely an aggregate of culture-elements; an assemblage of such elements in a given area may be accounted for without suggesting an explanation of the *modus operandi* of human advancement.

A further source of misunderstanding between ethnologists may also be traced to Comte. As we have seen, his conception of the proper task of historical study was the construction of 'ideal series.' The justification of this procedure, for Comte, was the assumption that such series represent the uniform steps in human 'development.' But Comte used the word 'evolution' as a synonym for 'development'; hence 'evolution' in ethnology, meaning the gradual progress of mankind or of any human society through a fixed and determined series of stages, has a significance distinct from that given to it in modern biology. The substitution, where Comte's influence is concerned, of the word 'development' for 'evolution' would put an end to much disagreement and controversy.

The study of ethnology, under Comte's influence, has been involved in difficulties. It is the merit of Sir G. L. Gomme that he recognized the necessity, if a way out of these diffi-

culties was to be discovered, of turning to the study of the actual facts of the history of culture in a specific area. Now, at first sight, this suggests merely the adoption of the point of view of academic history; in reality, it marks a new departure. What Gomme advocated, as we have already seen, was: (1) an historical study of the conditions of life in a given area, more particularly as these conditions have been affected at different times by intrusions and events; (2) a study which should take into consideration the entire culture of the area, treating the unprogressive aspects of culture as no less significant than the advanced; (3) a study which would utilize comparison for the purpose of determining what was peculiar or unusual in the cultural history of the area. This conception of a mode of procedure in ethnology is an important advance toward what is required for the investigation of 'how man has come to be as he is.' It marks a break with the tradition of the eighteenth century and its plan for determining the 'natural' course of change or of progress without reference to 'events.' On the other hand, as a formulation of procedure for the larger investigation, it is incomplete. To arrive at a fuller understanding of what is required, it will be necessary to consider at some length the experience of investigators, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in dealing with the problem of biological evolution.

CHAPTER 11

THE STUDY OF EVOLUTION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

IT was suggested above that the second major obstacle to the scientific study of man lay in the manner in which humanists and scientists had approached the study of evolution. It has now been shown that, owing to the acceptance of certain methodological conceptions in the eighteenth century, a definite separation was made by humanists between the study of progressive change and the study of events—with results that are abundantly evident. It has now to be pointed out that the biological study of evolution, during the nineteenth century, has been conducted with the aim of discovering *processes of change* which, it is assumed, have produced differentiation in the forms of life in the course of time. If, however, we assume that change in time is the result of the operation of processes of change which are uniform in time and place, it follows, obviously, that the study of change may be conducted without reference to the influence of historical events. The next step in the argument will be to show that the acceptance of this assumption, in the later nineteenth century, is a result of the joint influence of eighteenth-century conceptions of progressive change and of certain ideas associated with the work of Hutton and Lyell in the field of geology. It will be pointed out, further, that the devotion of biologists to the investigation of processes of change, which involves the effort to account for progressive change or evolution without taking events into consideration, lies at the root of the important differences of opinion which are evident among biologists at the present time.

In the 'natural sciences' we are confronted with a condition of things represented by the present state of stars, strata, and species. Until comparatively recent times, these

forms were looked upon as existing in one time-plane; it was believed that they had been made originally, as they are now visible to us, by the hand of the Creator.

With the scientific revival of the seventeenth century, men began to concern themselves systematically with the diversities exhibited in the different 'kinds' of natural objects. An immediate result of this interest was the effort to reduce the complexity apparent in things to some sort of order. The typical eighteenth-century example of this activity appears in the *Systema naturæ* (1735) and the *Species plantarum* (1753) of Linnæus. The great Swedish naturalist, in the spirit of Leibniz, regarded species as fixed, and as constituting a continuous series, and, in his classification, endeavored to depict the actual *scala naturæ*.

About the middle of the eighteenth century, the influence of the humanistic theory of progressive change, regarded as an orderly development following a definite and fixed series of steps, began to make itself felt. Thus, in opposition to established doctrines, the new conception envisaged the different classes of stars as showing the successive stages in stellar development. This view was formulated by Immanuel Kant (1755), and by Laplace (1796), and has remained a directive principle in astronomy down to the present. To-day the celestial bodies are arranged conceptually in an order from nebulæ to blue, yellow, and red stars, and this sequence is accepted as indicative of the phases in the life-history or course of development of objects in the physical universe.

Similarly, in the eighteenth century, efforts had been made to sort out and arrange conceptually the classes of rocks visible on the surface of the earth. Linnæus extended his *Systema naturæ* to include the inorganic kingdom, which he divided into rocks, minerals, and fossils. Under the influence of Werner, the knowledge of rocks was summarized, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in systems of classification which relied upon mineralogical composition and structure to indicate relationship, to the exclusion of age,

origin, and mode of occurrence.[1] It was not until 1815 that William Smith discovered that organic forms furnish the key to geological history and provide a means for determining the relative chronology of sedimentary deposits. This great discovery "showed that within the crust lie the chronicles of a long history of plant and animal life upon this planet, it supplied the means of arranging the materials for this history in true chronological sequence, and it thus opened out a magnificent vista through a vast series of ages, each marked by its own distinctive types of organic life, which, in proportion to their antiquity, departed more and more from the aspect of the living world."[2]

It will be observed that, as a result of William Smith's discovery, biology, no less than geology, was placed upon a new footing, and the contributions of palæontology may be said to have brought the civilized world to a belief in the theory of organic evolution.[3]

The introduction of a time perspective into our view of natural objects operated to replace the traditional theory of 'origins' by the theory that the differences which we encounter in the present are the result of changes which have taken place in the past. The significance of this substitution for the movement of thought lies in the fact that, whereas the Creation theory could only be stated and maintained as a belief, the theory of change demanded proof. It became necessary, in short, not merely to state that changes had taken place, but to demonstrate how these changes could possibly have been brought about through the action of natural agencies. Here, then, we come to a distinctive contribution of the eighteenth century. It was recognized that, confronted with a given diversity of forms in the present, the business of science must be the investigation of 'how

[1] H. E. Gregory, "Geology," in L. L. Woodruff, ed., *The Development of the Sciences* (New Haven, 1923), p. 175.

[2] Sir Archibald Geikie, *Landscape in History, and Other Essays* (London, 1905), p. 169.

[3] H. E. Gregory, as cited, p. 197.

things work' in the course of time. It was recognized that the aim of science must be the determination and description of the processes through the operation of which things have been and still are being modified.

In the field of astronomy, Descartes, in the seventeenth century, had attempted to explain the existing state of the universe by mechanical processes of development. It was a century later, however, before this idea was effectively worked out by Immanuel Kant. In developing his hypothesis, Kant started with the assumption that the materials now composing the solar system had originally been scattered widely throughout the system as diffused particles or atoms. He proceeded from these theoretical conditions to develop the present state of the universe by means of known mechanical laws (*i.e.*, processes) alone.[4] The procedure of astronomers in the twentieth century differs from that of Kant by reason only of the greater knowledge of physical processes which has been gained since his time. Astronomers are limited to a theoretical history of the past.

In geology, Kant had described the changes brought about on the surface of the earth by the action of natural agencies, such as rain and rivers, wind and frost.[5] It was, notwithstanding, left for James Hutton (1785) to establish the importance of the study of processes for the elucidation of the history of the earth. "With the intuition of genius," Geikie says, "Hutton early perceived that the only solid basis from which to explore what has taken place in bygone time is a knowledge of what is taking place to-day. He felt assured that Nature must be consistent and uniform in her working, and that only in proportion as her operations at the present time are watched and understood will

[4] T. H. Huxley, "Geological Reform" [1869], in his *Collected Essays*, vol. 8 (New York, 1894), pp. 320-322. W. W. Campbell, "The Evolution of the Stars and the Formation of the Earth," *Scientific Monthly*, vol. 1 (1915), pp. 187-189. But *cf.* Gaston Milhaud, "Kant comme savant," *Revue philosophique*, 39 (1895), pp. 492-493.

[5] T. H. Huxley, as cited, p. 322.

the ancient history of the earth become intelligible. Thus, in his hands, the investigation of the Present became the key to the interpretation of the Past. The establishment of this great truth was the first step toward the inauguration of a true science of the earth."[6] Hutton started from the point of view that the surface of the globe has not always been as it is to-day, and based his inquiries upon the principle that it has come to be as it is through the continued action of the same agencies of change that are to be observed in operation at the present time; "we are," he said, "to examine the construction of the present earth, in order to understand the natural operations of time past." "But how," he asks, "shall we describe a process which nobody has seen performed, and of which no written history gives any account? This is only to be investigated, first, in examining the nature of those solid bodies, the history of which we want to know; and secondly, in examining the natural operations of the globe, in order to see if there now actually exist such operations, as, from the nature of the solid bodies, appear to have been necessary to their formation."[7] Through the effective expositions of Playfair and Lyell these ideas have become the underlying principles of the modern scientific study of the earth.[8]

In biology, the recognition of the importance of the study of processes in relation to 'evolution' had been arrived at by the middle of the eighteenth century. In this instance the pioneer seems to have been Maupertuis (1745, 1751), the French reorganizer of the Berlin Academy. In the opinion of Maupertuis, "a purely descriptive and classificatory science, which was unable to formulate any laws concerning the processes going on in that part of nature with which it dealt, was, strictly speaking no science at all." "The general

[6] Sir Archibald Geikie, as cited, p. 171.

[7] James Hutton, "Theory of the Earth," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh,* vol. 1, part 2, I, p. 219.

[8] Sir Archibald Geikie, *The Founders of Geology* (London, 1897), pp. 150-184.

processes which Maupertuis thought it especially important that zoölogical science should investigate are those through which animal individuals and species have come to have the differences of form and function that distinguish them."[9] Even after this perception of the problem, the work of a century was required before the description of the process of 'natural selection' was put forward by Charles Darwin.

Natural science in the eighteenth century had thus achieved the notable result of envisaging the differences with which we are confronted in the present world as the product of changes which have taken place in the past. It has now to be shown, however, that the influential ideas which the eighteenth century transmitted to the nineteenth consisted in a series of assumptions which have deeply affected evolutionary study down to the present moment. The assumptions which lie at the foundation of the biological study of 'evolution' will be recognized as intimately connected with those formulated earlier in relation to the idea of 'progress.'

The theory of 'evolution' rests, in the first place, upon the assumption that 'progressive change' is 'natural' and to be taken for granted, and that the aim of this progressive movement is the attainment of perfection. In the judgment of Erasmus Darwin (1794), "it would appear that all nature exists in a state of perpetual improvement by laws impressed on the atoms of matter by the great Cause of Causes; and that the world may still be in its infancy, and continue to improve forever and ever."[10] Lamarck's *Zoölogical Philosophy* (1809) shows, as Osborn points out, that he had arrived at 'the truth' "that there is a progressive and perfecting development."[11]

Again, the theory of evolution assumes that Nature has

[9] A. O. Lovejoy, "Some Eighteenth-Century Evolutionists," *Popular Science Monthly,* 65 (1904), pp. 244-245.

[10] Quoted from E. Darwin's *Zoönomia* (1794), in L. L. Woodruff, "Biology," in *The Development of the Sciences* (New Haven, 1923), p. 254.

[11] H. F. Osborn, *From the Greeks to Darwin* (2d ed., New York, 1905), p. 161.

established a plan or 'natural order,' and that, in accordance with this order, 'natural operations' are always constant, always the same, always regular. A fundamental aspect of this view is that 'Nature never makes leaps,' and hence it was accepted that change, under all conditions, is slow, gradual, and continuous, and proceeds always by infinitely slight gradations. This doctrine of 'continuity,' it should be observed, is applied by evolutionists indifferently to the conceptual relationships of the classificatory series, to the sequential relationships of the time series, and to the filiation of successive generations. Thus Buffon and Lamarck thought that, by the direct observation of the present, we can descend by imperceptible degrees from the most perfect creature to the most formless matter—this 'degradation' follows from the fixed plan of Nature. They also thought that changes in time are made only slowly and imperceptibly. They held the view, expressed by Erasmus Darwin, that the offspring of a parent "cannot be said to be entirely new at the time of its production," since it is "in truth a branch or elongation of the parent."[12]

In Lamarck's view, the Creator had established an order of things which gave existence successively to all that we see. He assumed, consequently, that animals in nature are arranged in a 'natural order,' and, further, that, in the natural order of things, there would be a perfectly even development proceeding in a straight line throughout the animal scale, a progress toward the 'perfection' exhibited in the organization of man.[13] We would see that the linear series of animals is a perfectly regular and even progress in complexity of organization from *Monas termo* to man—were it not for the presence of certain anomalies or deviations from the straight line of development. These anomalies are, he says, due to

[12] For Buffon, *cf.* Arthur Dendy, *Outlines of Evolutionary Biology* (New York, 1923), p. 377. For Erasmus Darwin, *ibid.*, pp. 381-382. For Lamarck, *Zoölogical Philosophy*, tr. by Hugh Elliot (London, 1914), p. 72.

[13] Lamarck, as cited, pp. xxxvii, 14, 22, 56, 60, *etc.*

the influence of environment and of acquired habits.[14] Lamarck's conception, it will be observed, gains in intelligibility from comparison with the views of the Physiocrats and of Adam Smith to which reference has already been made.

The assumption that change is invariably slow, gradual, and continuous entails the very important condition that we may neglect the element of time. "For nature," Lamarck thought, "time is nothing. It is never a difficulty, she always has it at her disposal; and it is for her the means by which she has accomplished the greatest as well as the least of her results."[15] As Huxley remarked, evolutionists have "insisted upon a practically unlimited bank of time, ready to discount any quantity of hypothetical paper."[16] In its original setting, this view may be regarded as a healthy reaction against the current belief that the Creation had taken place in the year 4004 B.C. There is no exception to be taken to the tentative suggestion of Erasmus Darwin (1794) that "since the earth began to exist, perhaps millions of ages before the commencement of the history of mankind, . . . all warm-blooded animals have arisen from one living filament, which the great First Cause endued with animality."[17] When, however, it is assumed that Nature always has unlimited time at her disposal, and that change is invariably slow and gradual, the statement is equivalent to the assertion that, in the study of evolution, the possibility of 'events' may be ruled out of consideration. The dictum that 'Nature never makes leaps' thus comes to be accepted as assurance that there never have been 'events' in the history of the forms of life.

In addition to the assumptions of which we have been

[14] Lamarck, as cited, pp. xxxiv, 69, 105.

[15] Quoted from Lamarck's *Hydrogéologie* (1802), in H. F. Osborn, as cited, p. 165.

[16] T. H. Huxley, as cited, p. 324.

[17] Quoted from E. Darwin's *Zoönomia* (1794), in Arthur Dendy, as cited, p. 383.

speaking, biological evolutionists, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, also adopted from the humanists of the eighteenth century the procedure of the 'comparative method.'

As has been pointed out, the comparative method is based upon a philosophy of history, that is, upon the organization of the data of the history of culture in a unilinear series, in the light of the idea of 'progress.' With the perception of similarities between the present condition of 'savage' races and the earlier condition of peoples now advanced, the conception was arrived at that the present observable differences among human groups represent a continuous series from simplest to most complex, and this series of existent forms was equated with the historical series from earliest to most recent. The aim of scientific inquiry was then conceived to be the utilization of these two series for the construction of an 'ideal series' which should present the 'natural order' of human development.

In biology, the construction of the unilinear classificatory series preceded the acceptance of the interpretation of present differences in the forms of life in terms of historical change. Classification, in the eighteenth century, was based upon the notion of a unilinear and continuous series of forms from the simplest to the most complex. The introduction of an historical perspective led to the concept of a unilinear and continuous series in time, parallel with the classificatory series. Hence was formed the idea of a 'natural order' in the arrangement of forms, applicable at once to the differences observable in the present and to the progressive steps exemplified in the historical series. Through the acceptance of the principle of 'continuity,' which asserted that the units in each series were distributed in infinitely fine gradations, evolutionary study became the investigation of the transitions between the excessively slight differences or modifications represented in the 'natural order.'

We may now turn to consider the influence of these eighteenth-century ideas on the work of Charles Darwin.

In the first place, it should be understood that Darwin accepted the idea of 'progressive change.' In his view, "the inhabitants of the world at each successive period in its history have beaten their predecessors in the race for life, and are, in so far, higher in the scale";[18] further, in concluding the *Origin of Species*, he remarked that "as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress toward perfection."[19]

The form in which the problem of 'evolution' presented itself to Darwin was how species could have been modified in the course of time, how the modifications, variations, transitions in a continuous series could have been brought about. For the purposes of his inquiry, he adopted, as he says,[20] the example of Sir Charles Lyell, and carried over the presuppositions of 'uniformitarianism' into the field of biology. He thus assumed that Nature was uniform in her ways of working, and that, if the factors in the process of change now going on could be discovered, they might with confidence be taken as applicable throughout the past. He assumed, in short, that all change has been brought about through the slow, continuous operation of processes that are now to be observed. His next step was to make the further assumption that the clue to the processes of change or modification in time was to be found through study of the variation of animals under domestication. From this point he was led to the conception that Nature has exercised selection in 'the preservation of favored races in the struggle for life' analogous to the selection exercised by man in the preservation of favored animals for breeding.

[18] Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* ([6th ed.], London, John Murray, 1911), p. 492.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 669.

[20] *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, ed. by Francis Darwin, vol. 1 (London, 1889), pp. 67-68.

Darwin took over and urged insistently the principle that Nature never makes leaps—*natura non facit saltum.* It is to be noted, however, that he appears to have accepted the principle of continuity only in its genealogical form; he did not adopt the view commonly held by his predecessors that the series of existent life-forms was also continuous. He regarded the historical series as alone representing the 'natural order.'[21] Hence, in his conception, Nature, in the course of time, moves only by slow, gradual steps, by slight, successive transitions. He was thus led to maintain that the number of intermediate forms which formerly existed *must* have been 'interminable,' 'enormous,' 'inconceivably great.'

The crucial element in the presuppositions accepted by Darwin may be given in his statement that, as Nature can act only by short and slow steps, she can produce no great or sudden modifications.[22] Now the point to be observed, in relation to the present discussion, is that Darwin regarded this dictum as possessing a higher validity, for evolutionary study, than the facts of biological history. Indeed, he devoted a chapter of the *Origin of Species*—"On the imperfection of the geological record"—to the argument that, since the available information in regard to the past is imperfect and incomplete, it may be set aside altogether in favor of the canon *natura non facit saltum.*

If we examine the argument in which Darwin maintains the validity of his theory of continuity as against the data of palæontology, it will be found that, on his own testimony, the evidence does not uphold his view as to the number of intermediate forms. "Geology," he says, "assuredly does not reveal any such finely-graded organic chain" as his theory demands.[23] "We do not find infinitely numerous fine transitional forms closely joining species all together."[24] "Geological research . . . does not yield the infinitely many fine

[21] Charles Darwin, as cited, pp. 629, 655.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 646.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 413.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 452.

gradations between past and present species required on the theory."[25] Even "if we confine our attention to any one formation . . . we do not therein find closely graduated varieties between the allied species which lived at its commencement and at its close."[26] Again, on Darwin's own testimony, the evidence does not support the contention that nature can act only by short and slow steps. There is evidence that whole groups of species suddenly appear in certain formations, in an abrupt manner;[27] that species belonging to several of the main divisions of the animal kingdom suddenly appear in the lowest known fossiliferous strata.[28] Further, on Darwin's testimony, there is abundant evidence that the appearance of modifications in the past has been highly irregular. It should first be observed that "many species when once formed never undergo any further change,"[29] that "some species have retained the same specific form for very long periods of time";[30] Darwin thought that "a number of species, keeping in a body might remain for a long period unchanged."[31] Change, therefore, is not a universal characteristic; it is a phenomenon manifested, not continuously, but at intervals of time, and then, not in all forms, but in "only a few species at the same time."[32] "The periods during which species have undergone modification," he believed, "have probably been short in comparison with the periods during which they retained the same form."[33] It must be remarked, further, that, on Darwin's testimony, change in the forms of life is intimately associated with disturbances in the environment. Changes in the physical conditions of life, he thought, have produced some direct and

25 Charles Darwin, as cited, p. 637.
26 *Ibid.*, p. 430.
27 *Ibid.*, p. 441.
28 *Ibid.*, p. 446.
29 *Ibid.*, p. 638.
30 *Ibid.*, p. 635.
31 *Ibid.*, p. 668.
32 *Ibid.*, p. 455.
33 *Ibid.*, pp. 489, 638.

definite effect in the production of distinct species.[34] He accepted the view that the world at a very early period was subjected to more rapid and violent changes in its physical conditions than those now occurring, and made the inference that such changes would have tended to induce changes at a corresponding rate in the organisms which then existed.[35] He was of the opinion that, in the later history of the earth, "there has probably been more extinction during the periods of subsidence, and more variation during the periods of elevation [of the earth's crust]."[36] As geology plainly proclaims that each land has undergone great physical changes, corresponding changes in organic beings are to be expected.[37] Finally, we may point to his statement that there are regions in which "the manufactory of species" has been particularly active.[38]

This body of evidence, which he acknowledged would, if admitted, be fatal to his theory, Darwin rejected on the ground of "the imperfection of the geological record." In defence of this course, he argued that, though the known facts disproved his theory, his assumption of an 'inconceivably great' number of intermediate forms would be substantiated if the geological record were complete. Darwin himself recognized that his views as to the incompleteness of the record were the result of the discovery that the available evidence was in opposition to his hypothesis. "I do not pretend," he stated, "that I should ever have suspected how poor was the record in the best preserved geological sections, had not the absence of innumerable transitional links between the species which lived at the commencement and close of each formation pressed so hardly on my theory."[39]

Now, that life-forms have undergone change or modifica-

[34] Charles Darwin, as cited, p. 648.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 448.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 488.
[37] *Ibid.*, p. 643.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 644.
[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 440-441.

tion in the past either is or is not a fact. If a fact, it is a fact of history. Hence it would seem imperative, in a scientific inquiry, to consider the data of palæontology in advance of setting up a theory to account for the way in which change in the forms of life had actually taken place. "In all cases positive palæontological evidence may be implicitly trusted; negative evidence is worthless."[40] On Darwin's own testimony, palæontological study would certainly not lead to the conclusion that new species had always appeared "very slowly." It is necessary, therefore, to look for some explanation of his tenacity in holding to the dictum *natura non facit saltum* in opposition to the positive evidence. A clue is suggested at the close of the *Origin of Species*. Almost every naturalist, he says, now admits the great principle of evolution. "There are, however, some," he continues, "who still think that species have suddenly given birth . . . to new and totally different forms. . . . Under a scientific point of view, and as leading to further investigation, but little advantage is gained by believing that new forms are suddenly developed . . . over the old belief in the creation of species from the dust of the earth."[41] Evolution is here identified specifically with slow, gradual, and continuous modification, and the consideration of 'events' in relation to change in the course of time is ruled out as affording advantage to 'the old belief' in Creation.

[40] Charles Darwin, as cited, p. 441.
[41] *Ibid.*, p. 662.

CHAPTER 12

EVENTS IN RELATION TO THE STUDY OF EVOLUTION

IT must be understood that this is not an inquiry into the validity of the procedure followed in modern biology. The discussion of Darwin's approach to the study of evolution has been made necessary by the observation that there are two conflicting concepts of the *modus operandi* of change: the 'historical' and the 'evolutionary.' Of these, the former assumes that changes are consequent upon 'events,' the latter that changes are produced by slow, continuous modification in an eventless world. Without presuming to pass judgment upon the procedure of biologists, it may be said that no study of 'how things work' to produce something 'new' in the course of time can dispense with historical inquiry and with historical evidence. Evolutionary study cannot be successfully carried on without recognition of the fact that change, if it occur, must take place under specific conditions and within definite limits of time and of place. All change has a temporal and a geographical setting. Viewed in this light, the difficulties and contentions which have occupied so prominent a place in biological literature since 1859 follow inevitably from Darwin's initial acceptance of the idea of 'progressive change,' and his adoption of Lyell's 'uniformitarianism,' with its negation of historical evidence and its emphasis on 'continuity' and 'present processes.'

It is of some importance to observe that Darwin was more rigid in his adherence to the principle of 'uniformity' than either Hutton or Lyell. As far as method is concerned, the work of James Hutton was the immediate point of departure of nineteenth-century evolutionary study in England. As is well known, Hutton started from the observation that the surface of the earth has not always been as it is to-day, and based his inquiries upon the principle that it has come

to be as it is through the continued action of the same agencies of change that are to be observed in operation at the present time. As a corollary to this proposition, Hutton assumed that "Time, which measures everything in our idea, and is often deficient to our schemes, is to nature endless and as nothing."[1] It was on this foundation that Lyell's 'uniformitarianism' was based. Now it has not been generally recognized that Hutton distinctly points out that the postulate of uniformity or slow, gradual modification in unrestricted time is a methodological assumption set up for convenience at the beginning of a complex and difficult inquiry. "We have," he said, "been representing the system of this earth as proceeding with a certain regularity, which is not perhaps in nature, but which is necessary for our clear conception of the system of nature. The system of nature is certainly in rule, although we may not know every circumstance of its regulation. We are under a necessity, therefore, of making regular suppositions [suppositions of regularity], in order to come at certain conclusions which may be compared with the present state of things." "We are not," he stated emphatically, "to limit nature with the uniformity of an equable progression, although it be necessary in our computations to proceed upon equalities."[2] The assumption of continuous, slow modification was, therefore, regarded by Hutton as a methodological postulate necessary in the earlier stages of a particular scientific inquiry, but as one which was not to be permitted to interpose an obstacle to investigation. So, he remarks, "in the use of means, we are not to prescribe to nature those alone which we think suitable for the purpose, in our narrow view. It is our business to learn of nature (that is by observation) the ways and means, which in her wisdom are adopted; and we are to imagine these only in order to find means for further infor-

[1] James Hutton, "Theory of the Earth," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh,* vol. 1, part 2, I, p. 215.

[2] *Ibid.,* pp. 301-302.

mation, and to increase our knowledge from the examination of things which actually have been."[3]

Again, Lyell explained: "I did not lay it down as an axiom that there cannot have been a succession of paroxysms and crises, on which '*à priori* reasoning' I was accused of proceeding, but . . . I complained that in attempting to explain geological phenomena, the bias has always been on the wrong side; there has always been a disposition to reason *à priori* on the extraordinary violence and suddenness of changes, both in the inorganic crust of the earth, and in organic types, instead of attempting strenuously to frame theories in accordance with the ordinary operations of nature."[4]

Furthermore, it is of importance to recognize that, among Darwin's immediate followers, men such as Huxley took exception to his rigid insistence on the principle of uniformity. As everyone knows, Huxley was the great exponent, the publicist, of Darwinism. He accepted and advocated the theory of 'natural selection.' Nevertheless he objected, from the beginning, to the notion that evolution must of necessity be slow and continuous. In Huxley's judgment, Darwin "loaded himself with an unnecessary difficulty in adopting *natura non facit saltum* so unreservedly."[5] "Darwin's position," he thought, "might have been even stronger than it was if he had not embarrassed himself with the aphorism *natura non facit saltum*, which turns up so often in his pages."[6] In 1859, Huxley expressed the belief, both to Lyell and to Darwin,[7] that nature does make 'jumps' now and then; and, in 1894, he wrote to William Bateson that he had

[3] James Hutton, as cited, p. 302.

[4] *Life, Letters, and Journals of Sir Charles Lyell,* vol. 2 (London, 1881), p. 3.

[5] *Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley,* vol. 1 (2d ed., London, 1903), p. 254.

[6] T. H. Huxley, "Darwin on the Origin of Species," *Westminster Review,* n.s. 17 (1860), p. 569.

[7] *Life and Letters,* as cited, vol. 1, pp. 250, 251.

always taken this view, "much to Mr. Darwin's disgust."[8] From the outset some of Darwin's most devoted disciples objected to what we are now in a position to regard as his neglect of the historical or 'event' element in change.

Evolutionary study, then, has something to learn from 'history.' It has been involved in difficulties for over half a century from adherence to Darwin's refusal to take history and events into consideration in the study of change in the course of time. It has been involved in difficulties as a result of the acceptance of the idea, inherited from the eighteenth century, that the study of processes of change or modification renders the study of events unimportant and negligible.

Many biologists, in addition to Huxley, have objected to the assumption that all changes in the forms of life are due exclusively to the cumulation of slow, continuous modifications. The objection rests upon the same basis as the criticism which geologists have expressed in regard to Lyell's 'uniformitarianism.' With the accumulation of historical evidence, it became impossible for geologists to continue to assume that all changes in the earth's crust have been of the same order and on the same scale as the continuous modifications to be observed at the present day. The intensity of geological action has not been uniform throughout the past: at all times the ordinary processes of erosion and deposition have been in operation; at certain times, however, there have been 'critical periods' in the history of the earth,[9] marked by "episodal disturbances of indescribable and overpowering violence."[10] A feature that runs through all geological history is the intervention of great movements between periods of relative quiescence; epochs of deformation and mountain-building have succeeded periods of continental depression

[8] *Life and Letters,* as cited, vol. 3, p. 320. *Cf.* E. B. Poulton, "Thomas Henry Huxley and the Theory of Natural Selection," in his *Essays on Evolution* (Oxford, 1908), pp. 193-203.

[9] Charles Schuchert, in L. V. Pirsson and C. Schuchert, *A Text-Book of Geology* (New York, 1915), p. 421.

[10] Eduard Suess, *The Face of the Earth,* tr. by H. B. C. Sollas, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1904), p. 18.

and flooding. Concurrently, these changes have been accompanied by alterations of climate from extremes of cold, arid, and zonal conditions to conditions which were warm, moist, tropical, and uniform.[11]

The great disastrophic movements represent historical events which have radically affected the conditions of life upon the earth. Without taking these events directly into consideration, it is impossible to arrive at an understanding of the way in which the forms of life have come to be as they are. Evolutionary study must, of necessity, inquire "under what circumstances those marked divergences of type took place whereby distinct classes, orders, families, and genera successively came into existence";[12] it must "find out specifically what kinds of events" were involved in the appearance of new forms;[13] it must regard variation as a definite historical occurrence.[14]

From the beginning of modern evolutionary study, investigators have recognized that, to some extent at least, changes in life-forms have been associated with changes in environment. The more commonly accepted opinion on this subject stands in close relation to the assumption of slow, continuous modification: the forms of life have been subject to slow modification, it is believed, in response to the slow, continuous modification of the environment. "Every successive modification," it is said, "must have been due to a response on the part of the organism to some environmental change. . . . The whole process of evolution depends upon changes of environment taking place so gradually that the necessary self-adjustment of the organism at every stage is possible."[15] On the other hand, recognition of the 'event'

[11] T. C. Chamberlin, "The Evolution of the Earth," *Scientific Monthly*, vol. 2 (1916), p. 554.

[12] W. B. Carpenter, *Nature and Man* (London, 1888), p. 113.

[13] T. H. Morgan, *A Critique of the Theory of Evolution* (Princeton, 1916), p. 6.

[14] William Bateson, "President's Address," *Report of the 84th Meeting of the British Association*, Australia, 1914 (London, 1915), pp. 12, 20.

[15] Arthur Dendy, "Progressive Evolution and the Origin of Species," in *ibid.*, pp. 389, 390.

character of geological change has brought with it a recognition of the historical character of organic change. It has been pointed out, for example, that "the great floral revolutions of geologic history are connected with the great disastrophic movements."[16] Again, "as the earth's shell has been periodically raised into mountain ranges and the oceans have as often flowed widely over the continents, the environment of plants and animals has undergone repeated and vast alterations."[17] "It is very common," another authority states, "to find a new group arising near the end of some geologic period during which vast climatic changes were taking place. Such an incipient group almost regularly becomes the dominant group of the next period, because it developed under the changed conditions which ushered in the new period and was therefore especially favored by the new environment."[18] "There is probably," Merriam says, "close relation between the continuous change of the progressing living world and the fluctuations in condition of earth climate and earth crust. Movements of the crust producing change of topography and variation of distribution of land and water, taken with changes of climate, must have had important influence in keeping the currents of life moving."[19]

It is evident, then, that the acceptance of the historical point of view in relation to the study of change must lead biologists to the study of the conditions of life as they have been affected at different times by intrusions or 'events.'

History, on the other hand, has something to learn from evolutionary study. Events, until they have been brought into relation with some thing, object, or entity undergoing

[16] David White, in R. D. Salisbury, ed., *Outlines of Geologic History* (Chicago, 1910), p. 139.

[17] Charles Schuchert, as cited, p. 420.

[18] H. H. Newman, *Readings in Evolution, Genetics, and Eugenics* (Chicago, 1921), p. 70.

[19] J. C. Merriam, "Earth Sciences As the Background of History," *Scientific Monthly*, vol. 12 (1921), p. 10.

change, remain isolated facts which admit only of categorical statement. The historian must extend his horizon to include the concept that the phenomena of the past must be considered as affected by processes operative in time. The historian, however, cannot accept the view of Darwin and the evolutionists that change in time is the result of the continuous operation of processes of change.

This is a matter of such importance that, to make sure of our bearings, it will be necessary to return to the 'present,' from which all inquiry sets out, and to keep before ourselves the question 'how things have come to be as they are.' The present condition of the earth reveals to us an assemblage of differing forms of life. These different forms, as the eighteenth century discovered, are not all of the same age, they have existed for longer or shorter periods of time; some have persisted practically unchanged from the earliest observable geological formations, others are of relatively recent origin. A just view of the facts demands recognition, therefore, of the phenomenon of persistence or stability, as well as of the phenomenon of modification or change, in relation to the forms of life. "We are all accustomed," Huxley remarked, "to speak of the number and the extent of the changes in the living population of the globe during geological time as something enormous; . . . but . . . looking only at the positive data furnished by the fossil world from a broader point of view . . . a surprise of another kind dawns upon the mind; and under this aspect the smallness of the total change becomes as astonishing as was its greatness under the other. . . . Any admissible hypothesis of progressive modification," he continued, "must be compatible with persistence without progression, through indefinite periods."[20] As a more recent authority has stated it, "The great question is, Why do organisms progress at all instead of remaining stationary from generation to generation?"[21] If,

[20] T. H. Huxley, "Geological Contemporaneity" [1862], in his *Collected Essays,* vol. 8 (New York, 1894), pp. 289-290, 304.

[21] Arthur Dendy, as cited, p. 384.

however, the phenomena of life display a considerable relative stability, the investigation of 'how things have come to be as they are' must begin with the attempt to determine the processes which are manifested in the remarkable characteristic which Huxley called 'persistence.'

With the acceptance of this point of view, the conceptual model for the study of change in time will be subjected to a radical alteration. Instead of the picture of slow, gradual progression in unrestricted time, there will be introduced the complementary ideas of 'fixity' and 'advancement.'[22] Now, in point of fact, this alternative model has accompanied every questioning of the validity of the Lyell-Darwinian presupposition of uniform, slow modification. To cite but a few instances, it was implied, as we have seen, in Huxley's writings; it was expressed, in 1866, in definite terms, by Sir William Grove,[23] in his presidential address before the British Association; and was put forward, in the same circumstances, by Sir George Darwin, in 1905;[24] it has been accepted by most, if not all, palæontologists, and, finally, by a small but increasing group of experimental zoölogists. As stated by Zittel, "there have been periods when the process of transformation and the weeding out of organisms were greatly accelerated, and following upon these reconstructive periods long intervals of repose have ensued, during which intervals species have retained their characteristic forms with but little variation."[25] De Vries "supposed that after periods of relative fixity during which they are

[22] A. S. Woodward, [Presidential Address, Section C], *Report of the 79th Meeting of the British Association,* 1909 (London, 1910), p. 468.

[23] W. R. Grove, "Address [of the President]," *Report of the 36th Meeting of the British Association,* 1866 (London, 1867), p. lxxvi. *Cf.* Clarence King, "Catastrophism and Evolution," *American Naturalist,* 11 (1877), pp. 449-470, referred to by C. S. Peirce, "The Architecture of Theories" [1891], in his *Chance, Love, and Logic,* ed. by M. R. Cohen (New York, 1923), pp. 164-165.

[24] Sir George Darwin, "President's Address," *Report of the 75th Meeting of the British Association,* 1905 (London, 1906), p. 8.

[25] K. A. von Zittel, *Text-Book of Palæontology,* ed. by C. R. Eastman, vol. 1 (London, 1913), p. 16.

subject only to fluctuating variations, living beings may pass through shorter periods when their forms are abruptly modified in different directions by discontinuous changes."[26] More recently, Jennings has reached the conclusion that "the germinal or genotypic constitution in most organisms is extremely stable," and that "the facts in uniparental reproduction seem to point more toward the production of evolutionary change by action of the environment on the germ plasm than by any of the other methods."[27] This alternative model, then, envisages the course of evolution as consisting in (1) antecedent long periods of relative inactivity, stagnation, and fixity (during which slight, continuous modifications may occur, without, however, leading to 'new' forms), followed by (2) short critical periods during which forms undergo abrupt change, in which they make sudden fundamental advances or submit to extinction.

It must be understood that the construction of a conceptual model of the way in which change has taken place is merely a preliminary step to the investigation of 'how things work' in the course of time. It is obvious that investigation will proceed in one way if it be conducted upon the assumption of slow, continuous modification, in another if it set out from observation of the facts of 'fixity' and 'advancement.' In the latter case, the problem will be to discover the relation between the two sets of facts. Thus it has been thought that an organism is subject to a process of drilling into habits, from which, on occasion, it might be set free by some kind of releasing mechanism.[28] It has been thought that organic forms oppose a certain resistance to change in their life-conditions, that this resistance maintains their state unaltered or stable until the tension produced by the disturbing

[26] A. M. Giard, *Congress of Arts and Science, St. Louis, 1904,* vol. 5 (Boston, 1906), p. 277.

[27] H. S. Jennings, "Variation in Uniparental Reproduction," *American Naturalist,* vol. 56 (1922), pp. 14, 15.

[28] Francis Darwin, "President's Address," *Report of the 78th Meeting of the British Association,* 1908 (London, 1909), pp. 5, 26.

influences reaches a certain height, when a crisis is reached and change ensues.[29] It has been conceived that stability is a result of the operation of processes which control or inhibit the exercise of powers actually possessed by the organism; that this condition will be maintained until some disturbance of equilibrium takes place, through the operation of changes in the environment; that when such disturbance comes in, it gives opportunity for variation, and organic forms experience temporary release from the operation of processes manifested in stability or fixity.[30] While these conceptions have been put forward by different individuals, it must be remembered that post-Darwinian inquiry has been based, almost exclusively, upon the acceptance of Darwin's assumptions, and, consequently, that relatively nothing has been done to define the processes manifested in 'fixity,' or to bring to light the processes manifested in cases of rapid 'advancement.'

It will now be recognized that the difficulties in which both the study of history and the study of evolution are involved have their beginning in the eighteenth-century doctrine that 'events' must be excluded from the investigation of the provisions which nature has made for progressive change. If we are to undertake the study of 'how things have come to be as they are,' it will be necessary to eliminate (1) the assumption that progressive change is 'natural' and to be expected, (2) the assumption that the task of science is to discover the orderly provision which nature has made for progressive change, and (3) the idea that 'events' are not an essential part of the *modus operandi* of change in time.

In this situation, it would seem that the historian, already interested in events and unhampered by the tradition of 'slow, continuous modification,' would have less difficulty

[29] F. A. Lange, *History of Materialism,* tr. by E. C. Thomas, vol. I (Boston, 1881), pp. 45-46.

[30] William Bateson, as cited, pp. 18-19. *Cf.* also the view of Cuvier, quoted in J. T. Merz, *A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century,* vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1896), p. 138.

than the evolutionist in appreciating the fact that the investigation of 'how things have come to be as they are' must of necessity involve an extended program of inquiry. The explanation of any present status or condition will require a determination (1) of the processes manifested in the persistence of old forms, and in the stability of forms in general, (2) of the processes manifested in slow modification (which, however, do not produce anything 'new'), (3) of the historical conditions under which changes have actually taken place in the past, and (4) of the processes manifested in such circumstances.

It will be apparent, on reflection, that this scheme of inquiry provides a basis for the correlation of the activities represented by the existing studies of 'history' and of 'evolution.' To this new investigation the older evolutionary study will contribute the concept of processes operative in time, though the assumption that there are processes which directly produce 'change' or 'modification' will be eliminated. To the same investigation the older historical study will contribute the concept of 'events,' though the current acceptance of events as important in and for themselves will give place to the concept of events as the active element in change; events will be conceived, not as the expression of the will-acts of individuals, but as 'intrusions,' of whatever sort, affecting conditions in which the processes manifested in 'fixity' have been operative without disturbance.

The identification of 'events' as 'intrusions' is a matter of some importance. To reach an understanding of 'how things work' in the course of time, we may envisage the facts of experience as arranged conceptually in a series of concentric circles. Outermost, we would have the stellar universe; within this, the physical earth; within this, the world of organic life; within this, again, the world of human activities; within this, the larger group or nation; within this, the local community; and, finally, within this, the individual. In such a series, it is obvious that change in any outer circle

will affect all that lies within it. We may, then, define an 'event' as an intrusion, from any wider circle, into any circle or condition which may be the object of present interest. It follows that 'events' are not merely happenings which appear to any particular historian to be unusual or important, but are happenings of a particular kind. The new form of investigation will be concerned, in a special degree, with 'intrusions'; it will also be deeply concerned with the 'working out' of the conditions created by such events.

PART III

THE STUDY OF THE PRESENT

CHAPTER 13

THE METHOD OF SCIENCE

IN accordance with the initial proposal of this inquiry, it has now been shown that the efforts to bring the phenomena of social life within the purview of the method of science have been foredoomed to failure because of the initial acceptance by humanists of conceptions of method which introduced a complete separation between the study of events and the study of change in time. Pursued in isolation, historical study finds its end in the æsthetic appreciation of unusual happenings, while evolutionary study exhausts itself in the vain quest of processes of change. It will be obvious, therefore, that if we are to arrive at the desideratum of a science of man, it will be necessary to bring into one focus the historical study of events and the scientific study of processes operative in time. In other words, if the aim which humanists have set before themselves is to be attained, it will be necessary to reconsider and revise the methodological conceptions in accordance with which the separation between historical and scientific study was introduced in the seventeenth century. The first step toward the reconstruction of the procedure followed in the social sciences must be a consideration of what is meant by 'the method of science.'

As is well known, there is a marked disposition on the part of humanists to insist that their work is 'scientific,' in opposition to the usage which restricts this designation to the activities of the 'natural' sciences. The basis of this insistence appears to be the argument that, historically, 'science' is synonymous with 'knowledge,' or, more explicitly, 'knowledge acquired by study.' It is, in fact, true that 'science' and 'knowledge' represent simply the Latin and Old English words for the same conception. When, however, synonymous words are incorporated into a language, they become differentiated; each tends to acquire a special shade of meaning.

In this instance, the use of the word 'science' has come to be particularized during the last century, so that, at the present moment, 'science' stands for certain branches of inquiry characterized by specific aims and modes of procedure.[1] Whether the humanist is within his rights in using the term 'scientific' is not really the point at issue. It is the later meaning, connoting a particular type of interest and activity, that gives the word its present importance and significance. Nothing, indeed, but confusion can result from the reiteration that the term 'scientific' describes accurately the activities of scholars in the field of history. Clarity of thought is not to be attained by insisting that the same word should be weighted with two irreconcilable meanings in the same context.[2]

While, on the one hand, humanists have been accustomed to urge that their work was 'scientific,' many scholars have maintained, on the other hand, that the character of the facts with which they deal differentiates the investigation of human affairs, in a fundamental manner, from that of external nature. "However widely and carefully," says James Bryce, "the materials may be gathered, their character makes it impossible that politics should ever become a science in the sense in which mechanics or chemistry or botany is a science."[3] Clearly, even the genius of a John Stuart Mill has not been able to eradicate this opinion, which has for its basis, as Mill saw, just the fact that a science of human relations has not yet been brought into being.[4] The strength of knowledge lies, not in what it denies, but in what it affirms. To deny the possibility of an intellectual undertaking does

[1] On the words 'science' and 'Wissenschaft,' *cf.* J. T. Merz, *A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century,* vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1896), pp. 89-90, 168-172, 202-203.

[2] A. A. Cournot, *Essai sur les fondements de nos connaissances* [1851] (nouvelle éd., Paris, 1912), p. 468. C. F. Keary, *The Pursuit of Reason* (Cambridge, 1910), p. 100.

[3] Viscount Bryce, *Modern Democracies,* vol. 1 (New York, 1921), p. 14.

[4] J. S. Mill, *A System of Logic,* bk. vi, ch. 1.

not render it impossible; nor is the fact that men have tried to set up or create a humanistic science, and have failed in the attempt, any proof that success is unattainable. The history of each and every science is essentially a record of failure until such time as the problems have been attacked in the right way. To the scientific worker it is a truism that there are no scientific subjects as such. Any facts are fitted in themselves to be a subject of science. The field of science is unlimited. The unity of science lies, not in its subject-matter, but in its method.[5]

In seeking to determine what is meant by 'the method of science,' the humanist is not infrequently confused by finding various criteria of science set up which would rule out any possibility of establishing a 'science' within the range of humanistic studies. One of the obstacles to the recognition of the unity of method in science consists in the variety of the technical operations required for carrying on investigations in the different fields of scientific work. From this variety has arisen a tendency to confuse the technique of investigation with scientific method, and a disposition on the part of many scientists to insist that the technique of some one science, preferably physics, should be regarded as the criterion of scientific work in general.

As one source of confusion to the humanist, in the endeavor to reach an understanding of scientific method, may be mentioned the very old conception (maintained, for example, by Roger Bacon, Leonardo da Vinci, Descartes, Kant, and von Humboldt) that science consists in reducing all the phenomena of nature to mathematical laws, the idea that the amount of science in any subject is equal to the

[5] Marcellin Berthelot, in Ernest Renan, *Dialogues et fragments philosophiques* (Paris, 1876), p. 208. W. K. Clifford, *Lectures and Essays,* ed. by Leslie Stephen and Frederick Pollock, vol. 1 (London, 1879), pp. 125-126. William McDougall, "Psycho-physical Method," in *Lectures on the Method of Science,* ed. by T. B. Strong (Oxford, 1906), p. 113. John Dewey, "Science As Subject-matter and As Method," *Science,* n.s. 31 (1910), pp. 121-127. F. G. Kenyon, *Education, Scientific and Humane* (London, 1917), p. 18.

amount of mathematics it contains.[6] It is not necessary to involve the discussion in metaphysical arguments to see that, while mathematics is necessary to the study of physics, it is not a prerequisite to the study of biology. Geometry sets out from a collection of axioms; biology begins with a collection of forms of living beings. Mathematics can never pronounce upon questions of actual existence; but other established sciences have found means for dealing with such questions. Mathematics, therefore, cannot be regarded as the *sine qua non* of scientific work.

Again, science cannot be identified with the domain of 'experimentation,' for experiment cannot be applied to the historical content of subjects such as geology and palæontology.

A notable source of difficulty to humanists consists in the dictum, frequently repeated, that the test of a science is its power to predict. The success of astronomers in announcing in advance the occurrence of eclipses inspired Auguste Comte to set up 'prediction' as the ultimate criterion of science.[7] Through the instrumentality of J. S. Mill, this idea has been widely disseminated, so that to-day, and particularly among humanists, 'prediction' is accepted as the aim and the 'ideal perfection' of every science. To predict means, in ordinary language, to foretell, to prophesy; and unquestionably the popular mind has been greatly attracted by this suggestion of looking into the future under authoritative direction. The scientist is not, however, a substitute for the astrologer, haruspex, or card-reader. The happenings which the astronomer states beforehand are not 'historical'; they are simply regularities of nature which belong to a more extended time-system than that determined by the revolu-

[6] J. T. Merz, as cited, pp. 30, 281, 383. C. F. Keary, as cited, pp. 105, 107, 108. A. D. Lindsay, *The Philosophy of Bergson* (New York [1911]), pp. 9, 12, 16, 32.

[7] Auguste Comte, *Cours de philosophie positive* (4e éd., Paris, 1877), ii, 19-20; iv, 226. The idea was, however, taken over by Saint-Simon and Comte from Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain* (Paris, 1795), p. 327.

tions of the earth. No one would speak of 'predicting' the rising of the sun to-morrow morning, and eclipses, though coming at wider intervals of time, are occurrences of precisely the same order. 'Prediction,' as a term in science, has a different meaning, and one that has only just begun to make its way into the dictionaries. It means to announce the existence of something before the fact has been tested by direct experience, the declaration being the outcome of previous scientific investigation. The formal statement would be, "if my calculations are correct, then you will find a 'new' planet in such a part of the heavens"; that this hypothetical element is always involved is shown by the fact that the discovery of Neptune is associated more directly with the name of Leverrier than with that of J. C. Adams. Prediction, in science, has no reference to historical events.

Unquestionably the greatest obstacle to a clear understanding of the method of science on the part of humanists is the use of the word 'law' as applied to descriptions of regularities in natural operations. The concept of 'law' in science springs ultimately from the perception of an analogy between the organization of political society and that of nature. As Mill remarked, the term 'law of nature' is employed with a sort of tacit reference to the expression of the will of a superior. Whatever the significance of the word 'law' may be to the physicist, it is this imperative, mandatory sense that stands out in the mind of the humanist, with the result that he feels there is something strained and amiss in the statement that the phenomena of the world around us, including the actions of men and of societies, are 'governed by fixed laws,' that they are obedient to 'eternal decrees.'

It would have been fortunate, from the humanistic point of view, if, instead of the conception of enactment and command implied by the word 'law,' there had been taken over, for scientific purposes, the conception of habitual modes of action implied in the word 'custom.' Enactments are promulgations of some exterior or superior individual or body;

customs are the forms assumed by the interrelations within given groups. 'Custom' is, in fact, a close approximation to the point of view of science, for a 'natural law' describes just what things of a certain kind habitually do; it is a statement of the regular manner in which things act. Considered more strictly, a scientific 'law' is a formula, expressed in words or in symbols, describing the behavior of a selected group of phenomena; and scientific investigation is the effort to find out 'how things act.' The basic interest of science is in the relations of things. The implication in all scientific inquiry is that things 'work' or 'act' with sufficient regularity to permit of this 'working' being described. For convenience in discourse we may speak of these regular or customary modes of working as *processes*. Obviously it would tend to clarify thought if we were to employ the word 'process,' a term for the actual operation described, in place of the word 'law,' a term for the verbal description.

We may say, then, that the great object of scientific work is not the 'discovery of laws,' but the investigation and description of the processes of nature. "For science, the world of natural phenomena is a complex of procedure going on in time, and its sole function is to construct systematic schemes forming conceptual descriptions of actually observed processes."[8] The line of development in each field of science has been from the observational study of phenomena to the analysis of the observed phenomena in terms of processes. This step is most clearly marked in the case of geology, but it is no less definite in such widely separated fields as chemistry, physiology, psychology, and philology.[9]

If we are to appreciate fully the point of view of the scientific worker, it will be necessary to observe that what we are given in experience is a vast assemblage of results.

[8] Arthur Schuster & A. E. Shipley, *Britain's Heritage of Science* (London, 1917), p. 275.

[9] *Cf.* C. R. Van Hise, "The Problems of Geology," *Congress of Arts and Science, St. Louis, 1904,* vol. 4 (Boston, 1906), pp. 525-548. R. S. Woodworth, *Dynamic Psychology* (New York, 1918), pp. 34, 35, 42-43.

Whether we look at a mountain range or a piece of quartz, at a tropical forest or a garden flower, an empire or a scrap of paper, we are regarding results. Nowhere in nature are we presented with things in their 'original' form; nowhere are we provided with a labelled collection of their constituent elements. Furthermore, these results do not remain fixed. From day to day the mountain range is subject to modifications, and our garden, our circumstances, and our ideas change. Everywhere in nature there is activity—even within the atom.

The facts of experience are results of activities. There is, however, no one at hand to explain for us how these results have been produced; and so, from the dawn of thought, men have been driven to try to find out for themselves. The first naïve, uncritical way of explaining 'how things work' has always been to attribute these activities to some person or persons. Even in modern times, this type of thought has not disappeared, and men continue to speak of 'Nature' as a conscious agent. It is only with an effort, apparently, that we can rid our minds of this tendency to regard the operations of the external world as personal activities, a tendency unfortunately conventionalized in the use of the word 'cause.' For the scientist, however, phenomena are wholly impersonal; what he sees are things in activity, and any concept of 'will' or 'purpose' is out of place.

The initial step toward a scientific attitude is taken when men reach the point of eliminating the notion that the results given in experience are dictated by personal caprice or extra-natural interference. Science begins, in fact, with the assumption that there is such regularity in the operations of nature that these may be described in stated terms, and that, when formulated, these descriptions will be found to hold good for all cases of the same phenomenon. In adopting this mode of procedure, the scientist is simply following the experience of men in general when they give 'names' to objects and actions. Scientific classification names, in a

systematic way, the objects around us, many of which have escaped specific designation in ordinary language. So, too, the scientist observes the activities going on in the world and describes these more systematically and with greater precision than is possible in everyday life. Science, then, assumes a regularity in nature that makes 'naming' possible, and one of its great objects is to disengage, from the complexity of phenomena, modes of acting which have hitherto escaped attention.

We do not know 'how things work' to produce the results given in experience, and there is no one to tell us. In making the effort to find out for ourselves, the only means at our disposal is the use of the imagination. Attention is directed to some phenomenon; we wonder how it could have been produced, be it an eclipse, lightning, or an earthquake; and the answer we frame for ourselves, correctly or incorrectly, is an *hypothesis*. In principle, there is nothing unusual in this procedure; we employ it daily in actual life. It is the method adopted when we say, "I wonder what could have done it!" for what ensues, in the effort to follow up our dilemma, is the imagination and examination of one possibility after another. Scientific work proceeds along these lines, not in the haphazard and semiconscious manner of men in general, but by bringing the procedure into the full light of consciousness. As in daily life our best efforts may be baffled, so, in scientific inquiry, the search is not always rewarded. We may fail in the attempt to reconstruct the processes of nature through the exercise of the imagination, but we do not, on that account, doubt the assumption that the results given in experience are the outcome of natural ways of working, and that these ways may be discovered and described. Defeated in one attempt, the scientist starts anew, believing, not that the ways of nature are past finding out, but that he has not yet hit upon the right approach to the specific problem in hand. "The action of the investigator is periodic. He grapples with a subject of enquiry, wrestles

with it, and exhausts, it may be, both himself and it for the time being. He breathes a space, and then renews the struggle. . . ."[10]

Every result in nature is a riddle to be solved, and the initial difficulty in investigation is the discovery of a clue which may be followed up. Here the immediate temptation is to interpret the facts in accordance with analogies drawn from some other phase of experience. Thus, at an early period, as already mentioned, men formed the concept of 'laws of nature' by carrying over the idea of political authority to describe the source of the regularities which they observed in the world about them. We need not go back to beginnings, however, to find examples of hypotheses based upon analogy. When men are confronted with some result in nature, and are trying to frame for themselves a description of the way in which this result may possibly have been produced, they are disposed to make use of any resources of thought which may be available. In the employment of analogy, however, they are enlisting a dangerous ally, for, in thus assimilating the unknown to the known, a specious assurance is given by the familiarity of the latter element. Hence it is of importance to recognize that a scientific hypothesis is simply a working model of something going on in the objective world, and that, as such, it must be constructed out of actual information as to matters of fact.

Scientific hypotheses are not 'made up out of one's own head'; the scientist must have materials to work on. These materials consist, in the first instance, of inherited knowledge. Every investigator has for his intellectual background the acquisitions made by his predecessors, and every competent worker follows the example of Aristotle in making acknowledgment of the work of earlier contributors. The preliminary training of the scientist includes 'learning' what has been achieved in his subject up to the present; from this

[10] John Tyndall, "Scientific Use of the Imagination" [1870], in his *Fragments of Science,* vol. 2 (New York, 1892), pp. 102-103.

vantage point, for which he is indebted to others, he may himself proceed to new discoveries. The process of 'learning' is indispensable, but it has an undesirable aspect, for what is first learned imposes constraint upon the movement of thought. What one has been taught becomes in some sort a standard, and new ideas tend to present themselves as violations of an established order. So the past exerts an ever-present influence on thought; and it is against this background that every step in advance must be made.

The scientific heritage into which the modern investigator enters consists of collections of facts and of statements of theories. It is not sufficiently recognized that these two elements are virtually inseparable. Consciously or unconsciously, all facts observed and set down have reference to some notion, hypothesis, or theory. It follows that, while all scientific work is based on 'facts'—things specified as known to have occurred or to be true—the accumulation of facts as such does not constitute science. Actual scientific inquiry begins, not with 'learning' what is already known of a particular subject, not with the collection of materials, but with the perception of some difficulty in current explanations of phenomena.

What ensues upon the perception of a difficulty is sustained cogitation. This cogitation is aided by a reëxamination of the 'literature' of the subject, by tentative rearrangements or regroupings of the data available, and by the extension of observation as far as the investigator may feel necessary for the undertaking in hand. This activity proceeds with the question 'how?' insistently in evidence; and the effort in its entirety is a persistent struggle for mastery between the constructive or synthetic and the critical powers of the investigator. The conditions of the struggle are arduous; all that we are given is a result—the occurrence of granite, the diversity of the forms of life, the relative 'backwardness' or 'advancement' of human groups—and the problem is to reconstruct the operations by which this result

has been produced. The imagination of the inquirer is put to the test in the construction of a working model of a process or processes; his critical ability is called upon at every step to check his ideas by the facts. Thus it is that while, in theoretical writings, great stress is laid on the necessity for 'verifying' hypotheses, in actual work 'verification' is an integral part of the inquiry. Formally, however, verification means that if we say things 'work' in a particular way, the description we give must permit of any competent person's testing its accuracy.

The sole function of science is to construct systematic schemes forming conceptual descriptions of actually observed processes. If, now, we compare the work of the different sciences, it will be found that all processes are not of one general type. Newton's law of gravitation and Darwin's theory of natural selection are alike in being descriptions of 'how things work,' but they do not refer to the same order of phenomena. The difference, indeed, is marked, for in experimenting with the action of falling bodies we consider data apart from any historical setting or circumstance—to use an expression in logic, we 'abstract from' the historical series—whereas, in the study of evolution, the theory of natural selection is one attempt to show how something new could have emerged in the course of time.

The distinction here made runs through all the different fields of scientific inquiry. The chemist abstracts from the particularity of matter as found on the earth; he leaves the description of actual substances, their characteristics and their distribution, to the mineralogist; he isolates the chemical 'elements,' considers their modes of action in relation to each other, and endeavors to determine the processes of chemical change. On the other hand, the geologist bases his study of the structure of the earth's crust on the historical facts of the stratification of the rocks. But while the description of strata is an essential preliminary to all geological investigation, scientific work in geology dates from Hutton's

perception that the historical facts are to be considered in terms of processes which are to be observed in operation. The object of the geologist is to show how the earth as we find it has come to be as it is through the action of processes operative in time. Chemistry, then, may be taken as an example of the type of science which seeks to discover the forms and modes of action of the *constituent elements* of which things are made up, whereas geology is an example of the sciences which are occupied in the endeavor to find out *how things have come to be as they are.* The unifying element in these types of inquiry is the common aim of determining 'how things work.'

It is of importance to observe that the high abstraction from the particularity and individuality of objects as found in experience which logicians have insisted upon as the dominant characteristic of all scientific work is distinctive only of the first of these types of inquiry. As we have seen, the physicist—the investigator of *phusis,* the nature of things —abstracts from the particularity of what is given in the external world, and undertakes to sort out the elements of which the object under consideration is composed. He isolates his materials from the actual environment or setting in which they may have been found, and considers them apart from any actual position in historical time. Obviously such investigations proceed under artificial conditions set up in a laboratory, and not under the conditions characteristic of the actual world. Inquiries of this type—the 'laboratory sciences'—involve, at each step, a progressive isolation or abstraction from the results given in the external world. When, on the other hand, we turn to inquire 'how things have come to be as they are,' a different situation confronts us. Here the laboratory gives place to the world, and analysis under experimental conditions is succeeded by the study of 'kinds,' classes, orders, genera, and species, in their actual distribution in space and their actual relation in time. While the first type of investigation aims at results which are dis-

sociated from any limitation of time and place, the second concerns itself directly with the relationships of specific objects in their temporal and geographical distribution.

The distinction here made between inquiry into 'the nature of things' and inquiry into 'how things have come to be as they are' is not wholly new.[11] On the other hand, the failure to recognize it as determining the character of specific scientific inquiries has led to serious misunderstandings of the problems involved in the study of history and of evolution.

[11] The distinction here made has been recognized, among others, by: Turgot, in 1750, *Œuvres* [nouvelle éd.], par Gustave Schelle, t. 1 (Paris, 1913), pp. 214-215, 276. Cournot, *Traité de l'enchaînement des idées fondamentales dans les sciences et dans l'histoire* (nouvelle éd., Paris, 1922), pp. 219-222. Joseph Le Conte, *Evolution* [1887] (2d ed., New York, 1892), pp. 4, 7. Bernard Bosanquet, *Logic* [1888], vol. 1 (2d ed., Oxford, 1911), p. 201. J. S. Mackenzie, *An Introduction to Social Philosophy* (Glasgow, 1890), pp. 14-15, 18, 22. J. B. Baillie, "Truth and History," *Mind,* n.s. 7 (1898), p. 506. S. H. Hodgson, "Method in Philosophy," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society,* n.s. 4 (1903-4), p. 7. A. L. Kimball, "The Relations of the Science of Physics of Matter to Other Branches of Learning," *Congress of Arts and Science, St. Louis, 1904,* vol. 4 (Boston, 1906), pp. 70-71. A. E. Taylor, *Aristotle* (London [1912]), pp. 37-38. Emile Boutroux, *Natural Law in Science and Philosophy,* tr. by F. Rothwell (New York, 1914), pp. 155-156. H. W. Carr, " 'Time' and 'History' in Contemporary Philosophy," *Proceedings of the British Academy,* 1917-1918, p. 341. O. G. S. Crawford, *Man and His Past* (London, 1921), p. 85.

Hermann Paul, *Principien der Sprachgeschichte* [1880] (3. Aufl., Halle a.S., 1898), pp. 9-10, made the distinction between 'Gesetzeswissenschaften' and 'Geschichtswissenschaften'; *cf.* Hanns Oertel, *Lectures on the Study of Language* (New York, 1902), pp. 5-6, footnote. The distinction made in the text is not to be confused with Windelband's classification of the sciences as 'nomothetic' and 'idiographic.' *Cf.* also Paul Barth, *Die Philosophie der Geschichte als Soziologie,* I Teil (3 Aufl., Leipzig, 1922), pp. 32-33.

CHAPTER 14

THE INVESTIGATION OF DIFFERENCES IN HUMAN GROUPS

AS has been indicated in the preceding chapter, a distinction is to be made between the 'physical' sciences, which are concerned with the investigation of 'the nature of things,' and the sciences which are concerned with the investigation of 'how things have come to be as they are.' As we have seen, these different types of inquiry have the common aim of determining 'how things work' in the world around us, and the common procedure of constructing "systematic schemes forming conceptual descriptions of actually observed processes." It may now be pointed out that these types of inquiry have a third characteristic in common: they are both devoted to the elucidation of the *present* in which men find themselves situated. Thus the physicist concerns himself with the study of the constituent elements of things as given; the geologist or the palæontologist concerns himself with the study of things as actually distributed in the world. In the latter case, the scientist discovers the objects of his interest distributed in specific places, and his activity is directed to the elucidation of the present condition of these objects as given in experience.

In the effort to render intelligible the data before him, the natural scientist (as distinguished from the physicist) has found it necessary to envisage the different strata and the different forms of life in terms of a time relationship. Strata and species alike exist in the present, but their distribution and condition are best accounted for by attributing an historical significance to the differences encountered. From the evidence before him, the natural scientist reaches the conclusion that, as we work back conceptually from the present, the aggregate of conditions and distributions displays differences which become more apparent from age to

age. Furthermore, in his effort to introduce intelligibility into the data, the natural scientist has been forced to question how the results, which he envisages in historical perspective, could possibly have been brought about. It might be thought that this question would have led to a marked emphasis on 'historical' inquiry. Under the influence of eighteenth-century modes of thought, however, the natural scientist proceeded by accepting, as a directive concept, the idea of 'evolution,' by which is meant, not merely that the forms of life have undergone change in time, but that this change has always been slow, gradual, and continuous. As a consequence of this theoretical point of view, he was led to assume that continuous change is the product of some constant agency of change (such as 'natural selection'), which has been in operation continuously throughout the past. It would appear, indeed, that the natural scientist, having accepted an *a priori* judgment as to the character or form of change, has permitted himself to imagine that the facts of history might be discovered by experiment carried on in the laboratory. The natural scientist, then, sets out from the present, and has for his aim to show 'how things have come to be as they are.' In this endeavor, however, he finds himself involved in difficulties. We are now in a position to see that these difficulties arise from the fact that he has assumed at the beginning just what he is most concerned to find out.

In the humanities, the psychologist holds the position of 'physicist'; he is occupied with the study of how man is constituted. The 'social sciences,' on the other hand, are concerned with the investigation of results—situations, conditions, distributions—given in the present. In this field, the general aim of inquiry is to throw light upon the results with which we are confronted in immediate experience. The undertaking thus described presents, obviously, very considerable difficulties. As we have endeavored to show, however, the real obstacles with which we have to contend at the present time lie in the conceptions with which we approach

any particular aspect of this study. The crux of the situation consists in the fact that, if we are to arrive at a knowledge of 'how things have come to be as they are,' we cannot dispense with the investigation of how things have worked in the course of time. It follows, therefore, that the possibility of throwing light upon the *present* turns upon the mode of procedure we adopt in the utilization of historical facts.

It is of significance that, during the last few years, historians have come, quite generally, to express the view that the aim of historical inquiry is to show 'how things have come to be as they are.' What this means is that there has been a reversion from the point of view of nineteenth-century 'academic' history, which accepted 'the document' as the primary interest of the historian, to the view of Herodotus and Polybius that the historian is concerned, in the first place, with the elucidation of some present situation in the affairs of men. In presence of an immediate interest—the late war and the consequent unsettlement of Europe—the historian to-day proposes to show how this situation has arisen, and he proposes to do this by going back to some point of departure, accepted as a 'beginning,' and connecting this 'first' or 'original' situation with the present by a narrative of happenings or events.

The procedure thus adopted by the historian is, as has already been pointed out,[1] identical with the 'genealogical method' of the Greeks; but the modern historian, in his search for explanation, feels the need for something more than a mere genealogy of happenings. The desired explanatory element he discovers in the "conscious motives and purposes that appear to have had a determining influence." At first sight, it might seem as if this effort at explanation, on the part of the modern historian, represented an approach to the procedure of the scientist. In evolutionary biology, for example, the problem might be stated in the form: given

[1] Chapters 2, 3, 7.

a continuous series of changes, to find the uniform antecedent of change. Similarly expressed, the problem in history would be: given a sequence of events, to find the psychological antecedent of each particular action. In the former case, the aim of the biologist would be to discover the constant antecedent; in the latter, however, the historian assumes that he is intuitively possessed of the requisite psychological knowledge. If we examine the procedure of the historian more closely, it will be found that the explanatory element in his work must be identified, not with the particular 'motives and purposes' which he intercalates in his narrative, but with the entire series of happenings which he presents as antecedent to the situation of immediate interest. We have seen previously, however, that the series which the historian incorporates in his narrative does not include all that has actually happened, but such events only as the particular scholar considers necessary or important for his 'synthesis.' It follows, therefore, that the character of the explanation of any present situation given by the historian is to be sought in the nature of the 'whole' which he envisages by abstraction from the actual data. In short, the explanation provided by the historian is of the type represented in art, not of the type represented in science.

If we are to succeed in throwing light upon the present, it will be necessary to consider conditions as well as situations. It is clear, for example, that in any study of the antecedents of the recent war the economic condition of Europe must be taken into consideration, as well as the motives of the leading actors. Now, when we turn to this phase of the subject, it becomes evident that, just as the political historian follows a procedure inherited from the Greeks, the student of culture-history follows a procedure inherited from the seventeenth century.

What we are given in any present is an assemblage of different things. The Cartesian conception of science required that the investigator should abstract from these differences

in order to gain a knowledge of underlying similarities. Descartes himself reached the important conclusion that "whereas the senses reveal to us a world full of unbridgeable qualitative differences, thought reveals the deeper fact, that one single phenomenon, infinitely diversified, motion in space, alone takes place."[2] Before the end of the seventeenth century, this conception of the importance of motion had found a place in humanistic thought through its embodiment in the 'idea of progress.' Since the seventeenth century, procedure in the study of man has been dominated by the theory that, in reference to human affairs, change represents a necessary and continuous movement in a desirable direction. In order to exhibit this movement, the humanist has endeavored (1) to arrange the different forms of culture, existing in the present, in a unilinear series from the simplest to the most complex, and (2) to arrange the different forms of culture, known to have existed in the past, in a unilinear series of stages. Accepting these conceptual arrangements, which are abstractions from the facts presented in ethnology and history, the exponents of the comparative method in the eighteenth century took a further step, and, by the superimposition or consolidation of these series, undertook to determine the 'natural order' of human development. Subsequently, in the nineteenth century, the ambition of men such as Comte and Spencer was centered upon the formulation of the 'law' or 'laws' of the progressive movement of mankind thus exhibited, with conscious reference to the example of the formulation of the 'laws of motion' in physics.

From what has been said, it will appear that there are two points which must be taken into consideration in any attempt to reconstruct the procedure of the 'social sciences.' First, it is evident that the study of 'how things have come to be as they are' has, in all cases, started from the *present*, with the aim of throwing light upon this present. Second, it

[2] N. K. Smith, *Studies in the Cartesian Philosophy* (London, 1902), p. 28.

is equally apparent that the actual status of humanistic inquiries to-day is the product of methodological ideas and practices which have been taken over, without critical examination, from the past. It follows, therefore, that while the immediate problem, in the study of man, is the elimination of these inherited conceptions, the first step toward this end must be a return to the present, from which all scientific investigation must of necessity set out.

What we are given in the present is an assemblage of different things. In the study of man, the point of departure must necessarily be observation of the differences which particularize the condition of humanity in different parts of the world. Any survey, however superficial, of the present conditions in which we find ourselves situated will reveal the existence of human beings engaged in various forms of activity, such as the use of language, the maintenance of customs, the participation in rites and ceremonies, the manufacture and utilization of material objects. When we extend our view beyond our own neighborhood, it is found that these activities take on different forms and aspects in different areas of the globe. The initial step, then, in the approach to the scientific study of man, will be the acquisition of an extensive body of information in regard to the geographical distribution of human activities, spoken of, collectively, as 'human culture.' Geography, therefore, must provide the foundation for humanistic inquiry.

The observation of the cultural differences which distinguish human groups leads at once to a recognition of the major problem of the science of man, namely, 'how are these differences to be accounted for?'; 'how have the differences which we observe in the cultural activities of men come to be as we find them at the present time?'

With the recognition of this question, we are immediately confronted by the necessity of instituting a procedure for investigation. Scientific inquiry, as has already been pointed out, must rest upon comparison. Where there is nothing to

compare, that is, where the object under consideration is adjudged 'unique,' the only activity open to us is that of æsthetic appreciation. On the other hand, even a brief consideration of the experience of humanists in the past will afford convincing proof of the need of care in determining what elements we are to compare in the investigation of differences.

The attempt to account for the differences in human activities which we encounter in passing from one geographical area to another is not new. If we turn to inquire how the problem has been dealt with in the past, it will be found that, in the first instance, comparison was restricted to the single element of geographical conditions, with the result that cultural differences were correlated strictly with differences in physical environment, and, more particularly, with differences in climate.

The literature of the subject begins with Hippocrates, who devoted a large part (§§ 12-24) of his treatise *On Airs, Waters, Places*[3] to an analysis of the influence of climate, or rather of the seasons, in producing differences, both physical and cultural, among men. In his opinion, changes of climate affect even the land: where the variations of climate are most violent and most frequent, the land too is very wild and very uneven; but where the seasons do not alter much, the land is very even (§ 13). So it is with the inhabitants: "where the changes of the seasons are most frequent and most sharply contrasted, there you will find the greatest diversity in physique, in character, and in constitution" (§ 24). Plato entertained much the same view of the influence of climate upon the characteristics of peoples (*Republic*, 435 E), but the best-known passage on the subject is undoubtedly that in Aristotle's *Politics* (VII, 7). "Those races," he thought, "who live in a cold climate and in Europe are full of spirit, but wanting in intelligence and skill; and

[3] Hippocrates, with an English translation by W. H. S. Jones, vol. 1 (London, 1923).

therefore they keep their freedom, but have no political organization, and are incapable of ruling over others. Whereas the natives of Asia are intelligent and inventive, but they are wanting in spirit, and therefore they are always in a state of subjection and slavery. But the Hellenic race, which is situated between them, is likewise intermediate in character, being high-spirited and also intelligent. Hence it continues free, and is the best governed of any nation."[4] Polybius held that men "have an irresistible tendency to yield to climatic influences: and to this cause, and no other, may be traced the great distinctions which prevail amongst us in character, physical formation, and complexion, as well as most of our habits, varying with nationality or wide local separation."[5] Strabo expressed the view[6] that "while in a country that is blessed by nature everything tends to peace, in a disagreeable country everything tends to make men warlike and courageous."

The views of the Greeks were embodied in the first modern discussion of the subject. In his *Republic* (1576), Jean Bodin made a study of the differences of peoples, since, he thought, "the nature of the people is much to be regarded in the framing of a Commonweale." In his opinion, animals vary with 'the diversity of regions,' and, similarly, "there is in a manner as great difference in the nature and disposition of men, as there is of countries." On this assumption, Bodin set forth a long series of correlations between the areas which different peoples inhabit and their physical and moral characteristics. Thus he began by stating that "in the same citie, the diversitie of hills and vallies forceth a diversitie of humors and dispositions, and townes seated uppon

[4] Aristotle, *Politics,* translated by Benjamin Jowett (Oxford, 1920).

[5] Polybius, *Histories,* translated by E. S. Shuckburgh, vol. 1 (London, 1889), IV, 21, 2.

[6] Strabo, *Geography,* with an English translation by H. L. Jones, vol. 1 (London, 1917), II, v, 26.

On the theory of climatic influences in classical literature, see also Aristotle, *Politics,* ed. by W. L. Newman, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1902), pp. 363-364.

uneven places, are more subject to seditions and chaunges, than those that are built uppon an equall and plaine ground"; and he ended with the observation that "the nature of the place doth greatly change the nature and pronounciation of men." In short, the mind, morals, and manners of any given population are affected directly by the climatic and geographical conditions of the area which it inhabits.[7] While, thanks to his place in the history of political theory, Bodin's work is well known to students to-day, it is probable that Pierre Charron's book, *De la Sagesse* (1601), brought the idea of the influence of climate to a much larger audience in the seventeenth century. In this work the author considered (bk. I, ch. 41) the problem "Of the difference and inequality of men in generall." "There is nothing in this lower world," he said, "wherein there is found so great difference as amongst men, and where the differences are so distant and divers in one and the same subject and kinde." Considering these differences, he held (ch. 42) that "The first most notable and universall distinction of men, which concerneth the soule and body, and whole essence of man, is taken and drawne from the divers site of the world, according to which the aspect and influence of heaven, and the sunne, the aire, the climate, the countrie, are divers. So like wise not only the colour, the complexion, the countenance, the manners, are divers, but also the faculties of the soule."[8]

In discussions of the theory of the influence of climate, it is usual to pass at once from the work of Bodin to that of Montesquieu. This procedure overlooks, however, the important fact that this theory was commonly entertained, and

[7] Jean Bodin, *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale* . . . done into English by Richard Knolles (London, 1606), pp. 545, 568. Bodin had previously treated of the same subject in his *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem,* 1566. *Cf.* Henri Baudrillart, *J. Bodin et son temps* (Paris, 1853), pp. 413-448; Robert Flint, *Historical Philosophy in France* (New York, 1894), pp. 190-200.

[8] Peter Charron, *Of Wisdome, Three Bookes,* written in French, translated [1612] by Samson Lennard (London, n.d.), pp. 169, 171.

frequently set forth, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, by such persons as Bouhours, Chardin, Fontenelle, Madame Dacier, and more especially by the Abbé Du Bos.[9] The most influential contribution of the period seems to have been Dr. John Arbuthnot's *Essay Concerning the Effects of Air on Human Bodies* (London, 1733), which was the source of Montesquieu's treatment of the subject.[10] In *L'Esprit des Lois* (1748), Montesquieu discussed "the differences of men in different climates" (bk. xiv). Starting with the observation that "le caractère de l'esprit et les passions du cœur" are very different in different places, he undertook to account for these differences in peoples by the direct physiological effects of different climates. Thus he explained the "immutability of the religion, manners, customs, and laws in Oriental countries" on the ground that the climate produces a delicacy (*foiblesse*) of organs which renders Oriental peoples highly sensitive to impressions; the climate also induces indolence of body and mind, which renders the people incapable of exertion or effort (*contention*); hence, when once the soul has received impressions, it cannot change them. This, he believed, is the reason why the laws, manners, and customs are the same to-day, in the Orient, as they were a thousand years ago (xiv. 4).

It is evident, then, that the first approach to the study of differences in culture led to the assertion of a direct correlation between differences in culture and differences in climate and in physical environment. It should be observed, further, that the restriction of attention to this single 'cause' forced upon the inquirer the necessity of formulating unverifiable hypotheses in regard to human physiology.

In the nineteenth century, interest in the correlation of

[9] *Cf.* Alfred Lombard, *L'Abbé Du Bos, un initiateur de la pensée moderne, 1670-1742* (Paris, 1913), pp. 243-254. On the idea in contemporary England, *cf.* J. E. Spingarn, *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1908), pp. ci-cii.

[10] Joseph Dedieu, *Montesquieu et la tradition politique anglaise en France* (Paris, 1909), pp. 192-225.

cultural differences with differences in climate was, to a large extent, superseded by an interest in the correlation of differences in culture with differences in race. It will be unnecessary to give examples of this familiar theory. What is of importance, in the present connection, is contained in the statement of Waitz (1859) that the assumption of specific physical or psychical differences cuts short the study of cultural differences *ab initio*, and thus leaves the various phenomena of civilization unexplained.[11] The procedure to be followed in the investigation of differences in human activities must, on the other hand, be such as to bring the phenomena of culture into the foreground.

The question of 'race' suggests an important point to which reference is necessary. The study of 'how man has come to be as we find him everywhere in the world to-day' is not directly concerned with the investigation of 'how man is constituted.' Inquiry into the physical differences between the 'black,' 'yellow,' and 'white' divisions of the human family can be conducted only by biologists; the question as to whether there are psychological differences in human 'races' can be dealt with only by psychologists. In the present inconclusive state of scientific knowledge on these points, it is obvious that the only course open to humanists is to accept man 'as given,' to assume that human groups everywhere are constituted of much the same human elements. It should not be overlooked, however, that, while the acceptance of man 'as given' is a necessity imposed upon humanistic inquiry owing to the absence of positive results in biology and psychology, the assumption receives direct countenance and support from more than one quarter. Thus it is accepted without qualification in the practice of historians; it is accepted commonly by ethnologists on the basis of first-hand observations of 'backward' peoples; it is accepted by various psychologists as a result of tests made upon representative

[11] Theodor Waitz, *Introduction to Anthropology*, ed. by J. F. Collingwood (London, 1863), p. 329.

individuals from different cultural groups.[12] The problem has, however, another aspect. The present differences in the activities of human groups throughout the world cannot be accounted for in terms of 'environment' or of 'race' alone. Whatever, then, the conclusions of biologists and psychologists in the future may be, the necessity must still remain for the humanist to carry forward the study of 'how man has come to be as he is' as far as the materials at his command will permit.

[12] See, for example, Friedrich Ratzel, *The History of Mankind,* tr. by A. J. Butler, vol. 1 (London, 1906), p. 9. D. G. Brinton, *The Basis of Social Relations,* ed. by Livingston Farrand (New York, 1902), p. 20. E. S. Hartland, *Folklore* (2d ed., London, 1904), p. 44. Henry Balfour, *Report of the 74th Meeting of the British Association* (London, 1905), p. 698. R. E. Dennett, *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind* (London, 1906), p 239. Jean Finot, *Race Prejudice,* tr. by Florence Wade-Evans (London, 1906), pp. 315-316. Sir R. C. Temple, "The Evolution of Currency and Coinage," in *Lectures on the Method of Science,* ed. by T. B. Strong (Oxford, 1906), p. 188. G. L. Gomme, *Folklore As an Historical Science* (London, 1908), p. 192. C. F. Keary, *The Pursuit of Reason* (Cambridge, 1910), p. 49. Franz Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (New York, 1911), pp. 29, 122-123, *etc.* E. H. Gomes, *Seventeen Years Among the Sea Dyaks of Borneo* (London, 1911), pp. 262-263. R. R. Marett, *Anthropology* (New York [1911]), pp. 91, 235. W. J. Sollas, *Ancient Hunters and Their Modern Representatives* [1911] (2d ed., London, 1915), pp. 194, 286. Charles Hose & William McDougall, *The Pagan Tribes of Borneo,* vol. 2 (London, 1912), pp. 221-222. G. C. Wheeler, "The Concept of the Causal Relation in Sociological Science," in *Festskrift tillegnad Edvard Westermarck* (Helsingfors, 1912), p. 189. Vilhahlmur Stefánsson, *My Life with the Eskimo* (New York, 1913), pp. 148-149. S. A. Cook, "The Evolution and Survival of Primitive Thought," in *Essays and Studies Presented to William Ridgeway,* ed. by E. C. Quiggin (Cambridge, 1913), p. 412. *The Foundations of Religion* (London [1914]), p. 15. J. Grasset, "Les sciences morales et sociales et la biologie humaine," *Revue philosophique,* 79 (1915), pp. 109-110. A. M. Hocart, "Psychology and Ethnology," *Folk-lore,* 26 (1915), p. 125. Wilhelm Wundt, *Elements of Folk Psychology,* tr. by E. L. Schaub (London [1916]), pp. 112-113. W. I. Thomas & F. Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America,* vol. 1 (Chicago [1918]), p. 26. Viscount Bryce, *Modern Democracies,* vol. 1 (New York, 1921), p. 14.

CHAPTER 15

THE METHOD OF HUME AND TURGOT

1.

IN his initial survey of the world of human activities, the humanist discovers in the present a great series of cultural differences, associated with definable geographical areas. As a result of this survey, he is forced to ask the question: 'how are these differences to be accounted for?' Up to the present, almost all attempts to answer this question have been formulated in terms of some one factor, such as 'climate' or 'race,' and, in consequence, the humanist has been led into the discussion of physiological problems. So far, then, it would seem that humanistic inquiry must either adopt the procedure of the historian and fall back upon philosophy for ultimate guidance, or follow the course of the sociologist and stand committed to some theory of the 'original nature' of man.

The way out of this difficult situation was indicated by David Hume in his two essays, "Of the rise and progress of the arts and sciences" (1742) and "Of national characters" (1748), the latter published in the same year as Montesquieu's *Spirit of Laws*. In direct opposition to the accepted opinion of his time, Hume contended that differences in national characters were not the result of physical causes, and maintained that men do not "owe any thing of their temper or genius to the air, food, or climate."[1] What is of importance, in this change of view, is to notice the remarkable way in which the study of differences opens out, once the narrow correlation of culture with 'climate' is abandoned.

The point of departure, in Hume's two essays, is the question, 'why does one nation differ from another?' in politeness

[1] David Hume, *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. by T. H. Green & T. H. Grose (new edition, London, 1882), vol. 1, p. 246.

and learning[2] or in national character.[3] He assumes that the natural genius of mankind is the same in all ages and in almost all countries,[4] that "as far as observation reaches, there is no universal difference discernible in the human species,"[5] though, in another connection, he expresses doubt as to the negroes.[6] From this beginning, his study of present differences leads to distinctive results.

In the first instance, he is concerned, not with the question of change, but with that of fixity, sameness, or stability. Men acquire, he says, 'a similitude of manners' by association and imitation; and "whatever it be that forms the manners of one generation, the next must imbibe a deeper tincture of the same dye."[7] "If, then," he says, "we run over the globe, or revolve the annals of history, we shall discover every where signs of a sympathy or contagion of manners, none of the influence of air or climate."[8] The stability or persistence of governments he attributes to the exercise of power and authority. In large governments the people are kept in subjection, knowledge is dwarfed by restraint, liberty of reasoning is abridged.[9] The stability of monarchies arises chiefly, in his opinion, from the superstitious reverence for princes and for priests.[10] In a despotic monarchy "No improvement can ever be expected in the sciences, in the liberal arts, in laws, and scarcely in the manual arts and manufactures. The same barbarism and ignorance, with which the government commences, is propagated to all posterity."[11] In China, the authority of Confucius had such influence that "None had the courage to resist the torrent of public opinion, and posterity was not bold enough to dispute

2 David Hume, as cited, p. 177.
3 *Ibid.*, p. 244.
4 *Ibid.*, p. 195.
5 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 382; vol. 2, p. 68.
6 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 252, note.
7 *Ibid.*, p. 248.
8 *Ibid.*, p. 249.
9 *Ibid.*, pp. 178 ff.
10 *Ibid.*, pp. 181, 187.
11 *Ibid.*, p. 185.

what had been universally received by their ancestors."[12] In other words, association, imitation, and education induce characteristic modes of conduct and thought, and these are perpetuated through the weight of authority, superstition, and of public opinion.

Secondly, notwithstanding the influences which tend to perpetuate any present condition, the manners of a people undergo very considerable modification from one age to another. This modification Hume ascribes to alterations in government, the mixture of new people, or to "that inconstancy, to which all human affairs are subject."[13] Thus modification will ensue upon the establishment of law, since "from law arises security: from security curiosity: and from curiosity knowledge."[14] Modification will follow from the proximity of "a number of neighbouring and independent states, connected together by commerce and policy," since this relationship leads to the 'importation' of arts and sciences.[15] Greece, for example, "was a cluster of little principalities, which . . . being united both by their near neighbourhood, and by the ties of the same language and interest, entered into the closest intercourse of commerce and learning." In each city "a variety of objects was presented to the judgment, while each challenged the preference to the rest; and the sciences, not being dwarfed by the restraint of authority, were enabled to make such considerable shoots, as are, even at this time, the objects of our admiration."[16] Intercourse of different groups, importation of arts, and imitation[17] bring about the modification of the culture of any group in the course of time.

Thirdly, Hume makes the important statement: "I have sometimes been inclined to think, that interruptions in the

[12] David Hume, as cited, p. 183.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 250.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 180.
[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 181, 196, 254.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 182.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 185.

periods of learning, were they not attended by such a destruction of ancient books, and the records of history, would be rather favourable to the arts and sciences, by breaking the progress of authority, and dethroning the tyrannical usurpers over human reason. In this particular, they have the same influence, as interruptions in political governments and societies."[18] He recognizes, therefore, that, in addition to the modification which may be regarded as continuous, it is necessary to take into consideration the effect of drastic 'interruptions' of a given established order.

The interest in Hume's departure from the conventional point of view of his time is enhanced when we come to examine the group of writings with which, in 1750, Turgot inaugurated his career.[19] Turgot questioned the climatic correlations of Montesquieu,[20] and was thus led to observations identical with those of Hume, whose essays he had read and even in part translated.[21]

As has been pointed out earlier, Turgot was the first to draw attention to the difference between the types of science represented, on the one hand, by physics, and, on the other, by the joint study of history and of evolution or progress.[22] In scientific inquiry, he held it necessary to begin with the consideration of things as they are—"il faut partir de la nature telle qu'elle est"[23]—with the existing condition of peoples, both civilized and savage.[24] He took the position that the capabilities of the human species are the same in all places and in all times:[25] "the same senses, the same organs, the spectacle of the same universe," he thought, "have everywhere given to man the same ideas, just as the same needs

[18] David Hume, as cited, p. 184.

[19] Turgot, *Œuvres* [nouvelle édition], par Gustave Schelle, t. 1 (Paris, 1913), pp. 77-364.

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 262, 304.

[21] *Cf. ibid.*, p. 338, for translation in part of Hume's essay on "National Characters."

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 214-215, 276.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 219.

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 138, 257, 260, 279, 284.

[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 118, 139, 217, 277.

and the same propensities have everywhere taught him the same arts."[26] Further, it appeared to him that the actual state of the universe presented at the same moment, upon the earth, every possible *nuance* of barbarism and of civilization, and revealed the existence of 'inequality varied to infinity."[27] With this background, Turgot expressed ideas on the subject of fixity or stability, of gradual modification, and of the *modus operandi* of change, which may be indicated briefly.

In the first place, he observes that man in isolation and without commerce is everywhere in very much the same condition of barbarism.[28] Among more advanced peoples, the *status quo* tends to be maintained through the influence of education, which is one of the great sources of the stability of governments; it is maintained through the exercise of political power, for despotism induces in the members of the state a lethargic repose, which is opposed to all change and hence to all progress;[29] it is maintained by a blind conservatism which would confine the sciences within the limits of existing knowledge and preserve unmodified the earliest opinions, and it is in consequence of this spirit that the regions which were the first to become enlightened are not those which have made the greatest advances.[30]

On the other hand, modification of culture is brought about continually through the influence of commerce and intercourse between different peoples;[31] and so it comes that every nation represents a transition between its neighbors—"chaque nation est la nuance entre les nations ses voisines."[32] But, apart from contact with others, the culture of any group is always undergoing modification. Thus curiosity

[26] Turgot, as cited, p. 216.
[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 217, 303-304.
[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 216, 303.
[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 293-294.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 221.
[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222, 232, 259, 262-263.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 282.

multiplies questions, and by dint of groping, and, so to say, by exhausting errors, men arrive finally at some measure of truth.[33] No art can be cultivated during a long period of time without undergoing improvement at the hands of some inventive genius.[34] Consequently, even in the midst of the ignorance of the medieval period, an insensible progress was preparing the way for the brilliant successes of later centuries.[35] Moreover, each step forward gives greater facility for the next, and so the advance of a nation is accelerated day by day.

In the third place, Turgot expresses the view that the human race would have remained forever in a state of mediocrity, had it not been for the disruptive effect of migrations, wars, and conquests. Reason and justice, if listened to, would, in his opinion, have made everything fixed, as it has nearly done in China. Vehement fermentation is necessary for the manufacture of good wines, and it is by subversions and ravages that nations have been extended, and governments, in the long run, improved. Only through such means, he thinks, has reason been freed from the constraint of imperfect laws imposed by despotic power.[36] It is particularly noteworthy that Turgot insisted upon the importance of *migrations* in promoting advance through the mingling of peoples, languages, and manners.[37] "Everything that frees men from their actual state, that opens their eyes to varied scenes, that expands their ideas, that enlightens them, that rouses them, leads them, in the long run, to the good and the true."[38]

Finally, he points out that, after all the fluctuations induced by upheavals, everything must once more approach a state of equilibrium, and reach, eventually, a condition of

[33] Turgot, as cited, p. 220.
[34] *Ibid.*, pp. 118-119.
[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 133, 230.
[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 283-285.
[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 120, 137, 217, 222, 223, 230, 232, 260, 261, 272, 280, 281, 289, 345.
[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.

fixity and tranquillity.[39] So, through alternations of agitation and calm, mankind as a whole progresses continually toward perfection.[40]

The type of inquiry thus inaugurated does not appear to have been followed up either in the later eighteenth or the earlier nineteenth century. The reason for this neglect is to be found in the prestige and attractive quality of the 'idea of progress,' which, as we have seen, carries with it the assumption that 'progress' is slow and continuous, necessary and inevitable. In the middle of the nineteenth century, however, the study of differences, taken up in criticism of the racial correlation, led investigators to precisely the same characteristic form of procedure that we have found in the work of Hume and Turgot.

A particularly interesting case is that of W. H. Riehl, who was himself an exponent of the 'race theory' as allied to German nationalism. Riehl's major interest, however, was in the life of the people, and, in his travels through Germany, he came to observe differences between the life of the people in the country districts and that of the dwellers in the cities. The result of his observations was the formulation of the idea, in his *Die Naturgeschichte des Volkes* (1854-1855), that there are two great forces in social life. The first force, that of inertia, persistence, conservatism, is represented (*a*) by the peasantry and (*b*) by the aristocracy; the second force, that of movement, operates primarily in the towns. On the maintenance of equilibrium between the forces of persistence and of movement depend, he thought, the health and well-being of the state.[41]

A more important contribution of the type to which we refer appeared in the *Anthropologie der Naturvölker* (1859-1872) of Theodor Waitz. Adopting, as his point of departure, the study of differences, Waitz went on to show that

[39] Turgot, as cited, p. 218.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 285.

[41] G. P. Gooch, *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* (3d impression, London, 1920), pp. 574-577.

"the progressive mental development of some peoples, and the remarkable stability of others, depend upon other causes than on the differences of their original mental endowment."[42] In order to understand the various states of civilization in which man is found to-day, he thought it necessary to investigate, on the one hand, what delays or prevents man's development, or renders his condition stationary, and, on the other, what induces him to leave his natural state, and leads him from one step of development to another.[43] In this investigation, Waitz argued, it will first be necessary to abandon "the false theory, arising from the exclusive view of our European civilization, that there is anything in the nature of man generally, or of some tribes particularly, impelling them to civilization."[44]

In Waitz's judgment, the so-called lower races exhibit no desire to leave the state of barbarism in which they have been from time immemorial; the savage has no romantic longing to see the world; he remains content where he is, unless driven out by want or by enemies.[45] The stationary condition of backward peoples is due to isolation and an unfavorable geographical environment. Thus the backwardness of the Bretons is to be referred to the disadvantages of the area which they inhabit, and the stagnation of the Chinese and Hindus to the relative isolation of their respective countries.[46] In short, he held that "when we see a people, of whatever degree of civilization, not living in contact and reciprocal action with others, we shall generally find a certain stagnation, a mental inertness, and a want of activity, which render any change of social and political condition next to impossible."[47]

Geographical conditions bring about differences in the

[42] Theodor Waitz, *Introduction to Anthropology*, ed. by J. F. Collingwood (London, 1863), p. 328.
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 329.
[44] *Ibid.*, p. 352.
[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 328, 342.
[46] *Ibid.*, pp. 340, 342.
[47] *Ibid.*, 348.

culture of peoples inhabiting different areas, but do not, of themselves, bring about advancement.[48] Thus the transition from a primitive state to a higher condition of culture was not easier in Europe because of its geographical advantages.[49] Waitz, therefore, proceeds to examine the positive or active influences or stimuli by which men have been induced to leave their primitive state. The most powerful levers acting on civilization are, in his opinion, migrations of peoples and the wars to which these movements lead.[50] A people may be forced to leave its habitat either by a deficiency in the means of subsistence or by a powerful enemy.[51] Migrations, so occasioned, have very important results, Waitz thought, through the reciprocal influence of the various peoples which are brought in contact. In such circumstances, the relationship of peoples is rarely of a peaceful nature. Movement results in war, and while this, unquestionably, has injurious effects on culture, it would appear to be a necessary agency in the advancement of savage peoples. The reason is that war, 'als rettender Engel,' rouses men from mental indolence and physical lethargy; it calls for sustained effort, and stimulates invention; it induces organization, the recognition of common interests, and common action; it brings about the establishment of social classes, which, apparently, is indispensable to the development of higher cultures.[52] In the end, intermixture produces a remarkable transformation in the temperament and mental characteristics of the peoples affected.[53]

It is apparent, then, that, through following similar steps, Waitz was led to formulate a scheme of inquiry which was practically identical with that arrived at by Hume and Turgot a century earlier. As we have seen, this typical form

[48] Theodor Waitz, as cited, pp. 329, 341.
[49] *Ibid.*, p. 342.
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 344.
[51] *Ibid.*, p. 344.
[52] *Ibid.*, pp. 346-348.
[53] *Ibid.*, p. 347.

of investigation was developed, in each case, through taking differences as the point of departure in investigation. We see, therefore, that the observation of the present condition of mankind reveals the existence of differences in the culture of different areas, and that the study of how these differences have come to be as they are leads to a typical form of inquiry, which is concerned with the investigation of the processes manifested in the phenomena of persistence, modification, and change. It will be recalled that this procedure coincides with that suggested by Huxley and other biologists as an alternative to Darwin's procedure in the study of 'evolution.'

2.

We have seen that, in order to free humanistic inquiry from the dominating influence of the assumptions which we have inherited from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we must return to the *present* from which, in actuality, all inquiry sets out. What the present reveals is a world of *differences*, and the problem that arises is, 'How are these differences to be accounted for?' We have seen, further, that many attempts have been made in the past to account for cultural differences, but that almost invariably these efforts have been directed toward the formulation of an explanation in terms of some one factor, such as 'climate' or 'race,' with the result that the investigation of differences in the culture of human groups has been narrowed down to special questions in physiology. It has now been shown, however, that certain individuals, more particularly Hume, Turgot, and Waitz, starting from the observation of present differences, have followed a different mode of procedure, and have thereby opened out the investigation of cultural differences in such a manner as to require the coöperation of all branches of humanistic inquiry. This last point is a matter of such importance that it seems desirable to illus-

trate, however briefly, the way in which the investigative procedure of Hume and Turgot brings into relation phases of humanistic study which are now being pursued in isolation, and even with mutual distrust.

The point of departure in the scientific study of man must necessarily be the observation of the present condition of mankind throughout the world. The description of the different peoples and cultures of the earth is, to-day, one of the most significant activities of ethnology, and is an important interest in the study of geography. The descriptive accounts provided by ethnologists and geographers are to be regarded as contributing to the study of man the body of materials without which the major problem of humanistic research could not be formulated in specific terms.

The examination of different cultures as they exist in the present will not, of itself, suffice to show how the given differences have come to be as they are. Valuable as contemporary descriptions unquestionably are, they require to be supported by an equally extensive series of histories. It is obvious that the differences which we find in culture at the present time are recognized as differences of culture in different areas. It is also obvious that all histories are written with respect to the activities of men situated upon restricted parts of the earth's surface. Historical research, as distinguished from historical writing, leads away from 'general' history to the history of more and more limited areas. In order to carry out the study of 'how the differences which we find around us in the world to-day have come to be as they are,' it will be necessary to make comparison of the experiences of men under different conditions of life, that is, in different areas of the earth's surface; it will be necessary to compare the vicissitudes which have befallen different human groups in the course of time. The scientific study of man must rest, therefore, upon the comparison of histories. As Buckle, and many others down to Dr. Rivers, have seen, we cannot hope to arrive at scientific knowledge 'solely by

studying the history of a single nation.'[54] The reason why many histories must be taken into consideration, in the scientific study of man, is that the aim of this study will be, not the construction of an historical 'synthesis,' but the discovery of processes. We have seen that the diversity of history is a stumbling-block for academic historians; it must remain a difficulty where the object of the historian's activity is the creation of an æsthetic unity. On the other hand, the extraordinary diversity of human experience, in the past, makes possible a scientific study of 'how things work' in the course of time to produce the differences which we are given in the present. The type of inquiry initiated by Hume and Turgot will, therefore, call for the assemblage of historical data upon an unprecedented scale.

On the basis of the materials made available by ethnological, archæological, and geographical exploration, and by historical research, the initial step in scientific inquiry will be the investigation of the processes which are manifested in fixity and persistence, stagnation and conventionality.

Parenthetically, it may be well to point out that, in speaking of 'fixity' and 'persistence,' what we mean is that, within a given area, certain activities, that is to say, ways of doing things and modes of thought, have been maintained with recognizable uniformity from age to age. These activities constitute the 'culture' of the area in question. It should be observed that the word 'culture' is frequently used to designate the sum-total of the acquisitions of any human group, in language, in rites, customs, practices, material objects, in ideas. Strictly speaking, however, 'culture' signifies the work

[54] T. H. Buckle, *History of Civilization in England,* vol. 1 (new ed., London, 1873), p. 242. Paul Devaux, *Etudes politiques sur l'histoire ancienne et moderne* (Paris, 1875), p. i. Sir H. S. Maine, *Dissertations on Early Law and Custom* (London, 1883), p. 218. Karl Pearson, *The Grammar of Science* (2d ed., London, 1900), p. 359, n. 2. Jean Réville, *Les phases successives de l'histoire des religions* (Paris, 1909), pp. 235-236. Berthold Laufer, *The Beginnings of Porcelain in China* (Chicago, 1917), p. 148. John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (New York, 1922), p. 110. W. H. R. Rivers, *Social Organization,* ed. by W. J. Perry (New York, 1924), p. 99.

of cultivation; it means the *activity* through which the products which we assemble in ethnological museums, and which we describe in books, have been brought into existence. Similarly, the word 'tradition' is used at times to designate the sum-total of beliefs, opinions, and usages which is handed down from one generation to the next. On the other hand, 'tradition' properly means the act of handing down the customs, observances, doctrines of one generation to another. 'Custom' and 'tradition' are terms, therefore, which refer to *activities:* the doing and thinking of a group, and the transmission of this doing and thinking from generation to generation. The terms 'fixity' and 'persistence' do not refer to the objects which we find in museums, or to the rites and beliefs which we find described in the writings of ethnologists; these terms have reference to the activities of men.

Now, since the publication of John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* (1859), W. K. Clifford's address "On some of the conditions of mental development" (1868), Walter Bagehot's *Physics and Politics* (1872), and particularly since the appearance of Gabriel Tarde's *Les lois de l'imitation* (1890), interest in the processes manifested in fixity and persistence has increased with such rapidity that there is no branch of humanistic study in which attention is not now given to these phenomena. It is apparent, for example, that the investigation of the rôle of imitation and sympathy, of habit and of social pressure, in the existence of communities is rapidly becoming the central feature of works on sociology and of social psychology. It would, however, be an error to assume that interest in these processes is restricted to, or that it is attached in some exclusive manner to sociology and social psychology. The view which recognizes in the investigation of the processes manifested in conservatism, fixity, persistence, and stagnation the point of departure in humanistic study has been arrived at, to all appearance independently, in practically every department of humanistic inquiry. Students of anthropology, history, jurisprudence,

politics, of religion, literature, and technology, have all come to perceive the importance of 'social inertia and conservatism'; while folklore is, in its primary aspect, just the study of 'survivals.'

The second step in the procedure under consideration calls for the investigation of processes manifested in slow modification.

The study of processes of modification has been most systematically carried out in the field of the history of language. Since even the most cursory examination of linguistic phenomena will reveal the fact that the sounds, syntax, and meaning of words in all languages undergo continuous, slow modification in the course of time, it is not remarkable that a definitely scientific point of view in the investigation of 'linguistic change' should have been attained at a comparatively early date. While the older literature, more especially William Dwight Whitney's *Life and Growth of Language* (1875), is still of interest, the modern study of the history of language dates from the appearance, in 1880, of Hermann Paul's *Principien der Sprachgeschichte*, and, in its present state, may be found represented in Otto Jespersen's *Language: Its Nature, Development, and Origin* (1923).

Since Plato called attention to the influence of strangers in modifying the manners of a given group, much has been written on the influence of traders, missionaries, and other intruding individuals in promoting modifications in culture. In consequence, however, of the predominant interest in similarities, inquiry in ethnology, and in other related subjects, such as comparative mythology, has been concerned almost exclusively with the 'diffusion' of culture-elements rather than with the investigation of the influence of the adoption of specific culture-elements upon the habits and modes of thought of the groups affected. The study of comparative literature, which is devoted to the investigation of interchanges between highly cultivated groups, has more

nearly approached the procedure in the study of processes of modification established in the history of language.

It is evident, then, that we may regard the investigation of the processes manifested in fixity and persistence, and of the processes manifested in slow modification, as firmly established in contemporary humanistic study. In recognizing this fact, it must also be observed that this type of inquiry cannot be claimed as distinctive of, or as falling exclusively within the jurisdiction of, any one branch of inquiry. On the other hand, the common interest of all humanists in the investigation of these processes points the way to a notable advancement of knowledge through coöperative effort and the mutual interchange of ideas.

The third step in the programme of study here being considered is the investigation of the *modus operandi* of change.

It is a truism that the thought of the last half-century has been committed to the Darwinian concept of evolution as a slow, continuous process which admits of no 'breaks.' On the other hand, it has not been generally recognized that a generation which has upheld the universal validity of this view of 'evolution' should, at the same time, have entertained a conception which is in direct opposition to that of Darwin. Put in its simplest form, this opposing view is that the 'new' has emerged only at particular moments of history, and then as the result of some fundamental break with the past.

It is not to be assumed that this mode of procedure has been adopted by men who were ignorant of Darwin's work, or who even were consciously opposed to it. For example, in his *Physics and Politics*, Walter Bagehot undertook an exposition of "the application of the principles of 'Natural Selection' and 'Inheritance' to political society." It was the nature of his materials, and not hostility to Darwin, that led him to observe that the action of institutions is "to create what may be called a cake of custom,"[55] and that "the net

[55] Walter Bagehot, *Physics and Politics* (New York, 1876), p. 27.

of custom caught men in distinct spots, and kept each where he stood."[56] From this point of departure, he proceeded to call attention to the modification of culture through the influence of the contacts of commerce,[57] and, finally, to insist that "the great difficulty which history records" is that of "breaking the cake of custom."[58] He thus came to lay stress upon the changes which ensue "when the sudden impact of new thoughts and new examples breaks down the compact despotism of the single consecrated code."[59] Again, Ferdinand Brunetière devoted himself to the task of applying the concept of evolution to the study of literature. In his *L'évolution des genres dans l'histoire de la littérature* (1890), he unconsciously follows in the footsteps of Hume, Turgot, Waitz, and Bagehot in pointing out that this task involves (*a*) the study of 'la fixation des genres' or of the conditions of stability, (*b*) the study of 'les modificateurs des genres,' and (*c*) the study of 'la transformation des genres.'[60] The point of view of the philosopher, F. A. Lange, already mentioned, may also be referred to in the present connection. It is not questioned that the vogue of Darwinian ideas has had a notable influence in stimulating the interest of humanists in evolutionary problems. It may, however, be said that when any humanist, since 1859, has undertaken an investigation of the *modus operandi* of change, on the basis of his own materials, he has been forced by the evidence before him to formulate, as a minimum, a contrast between conditions characterized by the dominance of custom, conservatism, and fixity, and conditions in which change ensues from some marked disturbance of the established order. As has already been pointed out, this mode of procedure is not new; the point of interest here is that it should have re-

[56] Walter Bagehot, as cited, p. 29.
[57] *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[58] *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 39.
[60] Ferdinand Brunetière, *L'évolution des genres* (7e éd., Paris, 1922), pp. 20-22.

emerged with new vigor among men who were predisposed to follow Darwin.

When humanistic students have undertaken the investigation of differences in human groups, they have been led to the observation that change in ways of doing things and in modes of thought has, in the past, been due to some intrusive influence, which, for the moment, has interfered with the operation of the processes manifested in fixity and persistence. In other words, change ensues only upon the occurrence, at some given time and in some given place, of an intrusion of such a character as to break down the established order.

The form in which this theory of intrusions has most deeply impressed itself upon investigators since the middle of the eighteenth century is that significant changes in culture have been due to the influence of *migrations of peoples*, with the accompanying collision of different types of civilization. A brief indication of inquiries to which this theory leads will provide additional illustration of the way in which scientific procedure in the investigation of change in time brings into close relation separate aspects of humanistic study.

In the first place, it is obvious that the study of migrations must begin with the fullest annalistic statement of what can be known in regard to 'the wanderings of peoples.' Unfortunately, while interest in these movements has been prominent in literature for two centuries, the phenomena have been accepted by academic historians merely as a series of happenings from which selection is to be made for narrative histories of medieval Europe. Even on the historical or purely factual side, therefore, the investigation of migrations in Europe leaves much to be desired, while the study of migrations in Asia is in a seriously backward condition.

Again, the investigation of migrations raises at once the question of the historical conditions under which such movements have taken place. The two outstanding theories on this

point, at the present time, are: (*a*) that migrations have been the result of an excess of population in certain areas; and (*b*) that they have been occasioned by desiccation or change of climate. Each of these theories has met with opposition, but on all sides there has been too great a disposition to rely upon *a priori* considerations, and on the strictly historical side the subject has not received the consideration which its importance demands. It must be urged that such a problem as this can be dealt with successfully only on the basis of the comparison of histories of different regions. As bearing upon the interdependence of humanistic studies, it will be observed that the prosecution of this problem demands not only 'historical' investigation, but also a searching inquiry into the 'economic' question of the increase of human population, and into the relation of population to the means of subsistence.

The most important aspect of the study of migrations, however, will be the investigation of the changes which these movements have occasioned. In the mode of inquiry under consideration, 'change' is presumed to follow from the shock of an intrusion, and the typical instance of an intrusion is that of a migrating group coming into collision with another, differing from it considerably in culture, and remaining upon the invaded territory.

The effect of the collision and conflict ensuing from migratory movements which has been most attentively considered is the change in established institutions and social organization. Medieval European history, on the 'constitutional' side, is concerned primarily with the changes brought about by the 'barbarian invasions.' The value of the study of institutional history cannot be overestimated. Intrusions are 'events,' and the historical facts merit the most exhaustive investigation. Unfortunately these inquiries, as conducted by academic historians, have usually been restricted to one or another of the countries of western Europe. Since,

however, the aim of science is to find out 'how things work,' and particularly to discover the processes set in operation in exceptional circumstances, it must be insisted that the study of institutions necessarily involves the comparison of different histories.

The factual inquiry into the effect of collision and conflict in breaking down an established social order is, in itself, to be regarded merely as a preliminary step. The point that has come to impress itself, in recent years, on the minds of students is that, as a result of the breakdown of customary modes of action and of thought, the individual experiences a 'release' from the restraints and constraints to which he has been subject, and gives evidence of this 'release' in aggressive self-assertion. The overexpression of individuality is one of the marked features of all epochs of change. On the other hand, the study of the psychological effects of collision and contact between different groups reveals the fact that the most important aspect of 'release' lies, not in freeing the soldier, warrior, or berserker from the restraint of conventional modes of action, but in freeing the individual judgment from the inhibitions of conventional modes of thought. It will thus be seen that the study of the *modus operandi* of change in time gives a common focus to the efforts of political historians, of the historians of literature and of ideas, of psychologists, and of students of ethics and the theory of education.

The brief survey which has just been made has not been designed as an introduction to a complex and difficult subject of investigation, but as an indication of the way in which the approach to the study of man initiated by Hume and Turgot actually brings into relation phases of humanistic study which, at the present time, are being pursued without a common focus or united aim. Further, it would seem that this coördination of diverse interests constitutes in itself important evidence of the validity of the type of inquiry which has here been presented.

It may be stated that, in *The Processes of History* (New Haven, 1918), the present writer arrived independently at the type of inquiry which has here been identified with the names of Hume and Turgot.

CHAPTER 16

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PRESENT DIFFICULTIES

IF we are to overcome the difficulties which stand in the way of a strictly scientific study of man, it will be necessary to bring to light the sources of these embarrassments. The thesis of this book is that our present difficulties, in the field of the humanities, are the direct result of a continued adherence to certain methodological conceptions which had their beginning in the seventeenth century, and which received their characteristic formulation in the first half of the eighteenth century. It is imperative that we should understand that, in a sincere and devoted effort to reach a strictly scientific basis for the study of man, the humanists of the eighteenth century introduced an explicit separation between the study of 'events' and the study of 'change.' 'Change' to them represented nature's orderly procedure for attaining certain predetermined ends; 'events' to them appeared as accidental interferences with the 'natural order' of change. Hence it was believed that the scientific study of 'change' must proceed by making abstraction from the 'events' recorded by historians. Further, the conception of a 'natural order' of change was identified with the idea of 'progress.' The humanists of the eighteenth century devoted themselves to the task of defining the character or nature of 'progress,' and arrived at the conclusion that it was a 'natural' movement, which proceeded, slowly and continuously, in a desirable direction. The influence of these methodological conceptions is evident to-day in the continued separation between history, on the one hand, and the 'sciences' of economics, sociology, and anthropology, on the other, and in the continued acceptance of the idea of progress as the directive concept in humanistic studies. To appreciate the significance of this inheritance, and to recognize fully the influence of

the idea of progress on humanistic inquiry, it will be advisable to examine a number of current contributions to different aspects of the study of man. The writings selected for examination are believed to be representative of conditions existing in the social sciences at the present time.

In the study of history, the activities of scholars give evidence of a widespread dissatisfaction with the conventional procedure of 'academic' historians. This dissatisfaction is the result of a number of converging influences. Thus the remarkable extension of our knowledge of ancient history through the prosecution of archæological exploration during the last half-century, and the equally remarkable extension of our insight into the social customs and religious practices of ancient peoples through the enlargement of anthropological knowledge, have led to a new emphasis upon the study of the conditions of culture and the phenomena of change. Again, in an intellectual world of which the most conspicuous characteristic is the activity of scientific workers, it was inevitable that a considerable number of historical students should come eventually to ask themselves whether important results might not also be reached in the field of history through the utilization of 'scientific' modes of procedure. Further, the use which was found for the services of historians during the war of 1914-1918 brought into the open, and forced upon the attention of scholars in every country, certain 'propagandist' features of nineteenth-century historiography which academic teachers had been at pains to gloss over, or had pointed to as attaching only to history-writing in the past.

In this situation, the dissatisfaction of historical students finds expression in the plea for a 'new' history. The term 'new history' appears to have been given a certain currency by James Harvey Robinson; his books, *The New History* (1912) and *The Mind in the Making* (1921), may, therefore, be presumed to furnish a clue to some of the underly-

ing conceptions of the group of historians opposed to 'traditional' or 'academic' history.

The background of Professor Robinson's discussion appears to be a strong emotional reaction against what he describes as "the shocking derangement of human affairs which now prevails in most civilized countries, including our own."[1] The 'predicaments and confusions' of civilization should have supplied an incitement to study, but, he says, it must be admitted that we have made no such advance in the knowledge of man as has been made during the past few centuries in the study of nature.[2] In fact, "the progress of mankind in the scientific knowledge and regulation of human affairs has remained almost stationary for over two thousand years,"[3] with the result that "it seems as if we had not yet got anywhere near a real science of man."[4] The author agrees with Mr. H. G. Wells that the situation with which civilization is confronted is coming more and more to be "a race between education and catastrophe."[5] In these circumstances, what seems to Professor Robinson necessary is "to bring to bear on human affairs that critical type of thought and calculation for which the remunerative thought about molecules and chromosomes has prepared the way."[6] Hence the essential matter for consideration resolves itself into the question how scientific modes of thought may be introduced in the study of man. Professor Robinson maintains that this result may be accomplished by means of the 'new' history.

It should be observed that the 'new' history differs from the old merely in respect to the selection of the factual data to be included in the narrative. The writer of the 'new' history, not being interested in battles and sieges or the conduct of kings, will select some other thread for his narrative than

[1] J. H. Robinson, *The Mind in the Making* (New York, 1921), p. 4.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 8.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 228.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

the old political one.[7] The 'new' history is to be envisaged, then, as a narrative of the old form in which the facts presented have been selected with a new purpose in view. This purpose is determined for Professor Robinson by his conception of the intellectual activities required for bringing scientific thought to bear upon the problems of society.

If only, Professor Robinson remarks, men could come to look at things differently from the way they now generally do, no inconsiderable part of the evils which afflict society would vanish away or remedy themselves automatically.[8] Making appeal to historical evidence, he says that in order to permit of the modern discoveries in science "it was necessary to discard practically all the consecrated notions of the world and its workings which had been held by the best and wisest and purest of mankind down to three hundred years ago."[9] He infers, therefore, that what is needed, in order to bring about similar results in the study of society, is that we should proceed to "the thorough reconstruction of our mind," that we should create for ourselves "an unprecedented attitude of mind," that our aim should be to "endeavor manfully to change our minds."[10] This needed change is to be effected by permitting certain historical facts, of his selection, "to play a constant part in our thinking." These facts would tend to free our minds so as to permit honest thought; they would "automatically eliminate a very considerable portion of the gross stupidity and blindness which characterize our present thought and conduct in public affairs"; and, above all, they would "contribute greatly to developing the needed scientific attitude towards human concerns."[11] On the basis of this theory of the influence of historical facts, the purpose of the 'new' history will be to utilize historical materials in such a way as to promote a

[7] J. H. Robinson, *The New History* (New York, 1912), pp. 138-139.
[8] *The Mind in the Making,* pp. 3, 198.
[9] *Ibid.,* p. 25.
[10] *Ibid.,* pp. 5, 13, 211.
[11] *Ibid.,* p. 14.

"beneficent change of mind," "intellectual regeneration," and "change of heart."[12]

If we are to have a science of society, then, we must change our mind in regard to the ideas about society which we have inherited from the past. These ideas, however, are adhered to and supported by the conservative element in our present social organization. It is this element, Professor Robinson insists, which actively opposes the change and regeneration of thought which is needed. History has been systematically utilized to substantiate the claims of the conservatives. 'By right,' however, it is the weapon of the radicals, who should wrest it from the hands of their opponents. The 'new' history, therefore, will devote itself to using this weapon 'on the conservative' with the most decisive effect.[13]

Professor Robinson thus advocates the view that what is required in order to arrive at a science of society is a change of mind from the conservative to the radical attitude, this change to be brought about through the instrumentality of the 'new' history. Unusual as this conception may appear to be, it follows, naturally enough, from his theory of progress. The old history, identified with the conservative interest, is indifferent, he says, to the whole question of human development;[14] the older historian uses such terms as 'progress' and 'decline,' 'human nature,' 'historical continuity,' and 'civilization' without any adequate understanding of their meaning.[15] The 'new' history, on the other hand, is directly concerned with 'progress' and 'betterment,'[16] and regards conservatism as "a hopeless and wicked anachronism."[17] The 'new' history recognizes, in the 'natural order,' "a mysterious unconscious impulse" which has always been unsettling the existing conditions and pushing forward; an

[12] *The Mind in the Making,* pp. 4, 16, 49, 172, 217.
[13] *The New History,* p. 252.
[14] *Ibid.,* p. 89.
[15] *Ibid.,* p. 92.
[16] *Ibid.,* pp. 21, 23, 130, 142.
[17] *Ibid.,* p. 265.

impulse which represents "the inherent radicalism of nature herself." This impulse or power, he holds, "must be reckoned with by the most exacting historian and the hardest-headed man of science." It is the "innate force of change," which has been silently operating despite the lethargy and indifference of man himself. It follows, therefore, that the one thing needful is that we should "coöperate with the vital principle of betterment."[18] Coöperation with progress or betterment means overcoming the obstacles placed in its way by the conservative element in society, and represents the activity necessary in order to bring social inquiries within the scope of scientific procedure. If, at this point, the suspicion should suggest itself that Professor Robinson seems to place the recommendations of political and social 'radicals' on a footing with the conclusions of scientific investigators, the doubt will not be allayed when we find him saying that "we have learned as yet to respect only one class of fundamental innovators, those dedicated to natural science and its applications—the social innovator is still generally suspect,"[19] or when we read that "the conscious reformer who appeals to the future is the final product of a progressive order of things."[20]

Professor Robinson is undoubtedly in earnest, and the reception which his books have been accorded demonstrates that many others, beside himself, feel that civilization is threatened,[21] and that scientific knowledge would enable man to direct his affairs more intelligently.[22] Some part of Professor Robinson's audience may possibly be gratified by his identification of the 'radical' with the 'scientist'; by his inciting phrase that it is only fear that holds us back;[23] by his call for a great revolution which will substitute purpose

[18] *The New History,* pp. 264-265.
[19] *The Mind in the Making,* p. 138.
[20] *The New History,* p. 264.
[21] *The Mind in the Making,* p. 206.
[22] *Ibid.,* p. 157.
[23] *Ibid.,* p. 209.

for tradition.[24] On the other hand, in presence of this identification, the critic will be forced to ask what the author actually means by 'science' and 'scientific knowledge.' Science, he says, "is but the most accurate information available about the world."[25] Scientific method he identifies with "an appreciation of the overwhelming significance of the small, the common, and the obscure, and an unhesitating rejection of all theological, supernatural, and anthropocentric explanations."[26] This statement will certainly appear inadequate, but, if we compare it with his description of the 'achievements' of historical inquiry during the last sixty or seventy years,[27] the conclusion will be forced upon us that Professor Robinson has derived his conceptions of science and of scientific method solely from academic teachers of history. It must be admitted that Professor Robinson has been too deeply absorbed in his generous enthusiasm for 'betterment' to find out how the student of nature actually goes to work.[28] It must be confessed that his plan for arriving at scientific results in the study of society by the process of changing one's mind is somewhat too simple. If we are to set on foot a scientific study of man or of society, we must get beyond Bacon and Descartes, on whose guidance Professor Robinson confidently relies. If we are to undertake scientific investigation in the field of the humanities, we must be prepared to recognize that the acceptance of 'progress' as 'natural' and continuous involves the acceptance of some 'mysterious impulse' to which this necessary and inevitable movement is due.

The views of Professor Robinson betray the influence of three phases of thought which recur insistently in all contemporary discussions of the applicability of scientific

[24] *The Mind in the Making,* p. 212.
[25] *Ibid.,* p. 208.
[26] *The New History,* p. 48.
[27] *Ibid.,* p. 75.
[28] *Cf.* above, ch. 13.

method in the study of history. In the first place, the advocates of a 'new' history, while disapproving established conventions in history-writing, aim merely at substituting some other content for the politico-military interest of historical narrative. Historiography remains the goal of their efforts. They do not seem to have considered the possibility that the results of a scientific study of historical facts might be expected to take a form differing widely from historical narration. In the second place, the 'new' historian accepts the idea of progress as the directive concept for his efforts, regardless of the fact that he has taken over this idea, without critical examination, from the philosophers of history of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whose work he unhesitatingly condemns. In the third place, the dissenters from historical tradition greatly oversimplify the procedure necessary for arriving at scientific results.

This last phase may here be illustrated from the significant address on "Law in History" which Edward Potts Cheney delivered, in 1923, as president of the American Historical Association.[29] History, the great course of human affairs, Professor Cheney says, has not been the result of chance, it has been controlled by immutable, self-existent law.[30] "Man is simply a part of a law-controlled world."[31] What is necessary, then, is that the student should set about the task of reducing the vast multifariousness of history to simplicity, of finding the law or laws which underlie its apparent lawlessness.[32] These natural laws we must accept whether we want to or not; their workings we cannot obviate, however much we may thwart them to our own failure and disadvantage.[33] The conception of 'laws' here expressed raises difficulties in regard to the "free choice and free action of man"[34] which Professor Cheney, like John Stuart Mill

[29] *American Historical Review*, 29 (1924), pp. 231-248.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 235.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 236.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 236.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 245.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 245.

before him, endeavors to face. His conclusion is that "If the action of man has been conformable to law it has been effective; when he has worked along with the great forces of history he has influenced constructively the course of events; when his action has violated historic law the results have been destructive, momentary, subject to reversal. Men have always been and are free to act; the results of their actions will depend on the conformity or nonconformity of these actions to historic law."[35] If, however, we substitute in this passage 'the Will of God' for 'historic law,' the statement would appear to satisfy even the exacting theological requirements of our Calvinistic forefathers.

In the body of his address, Professor Cheney formulates six 'historic laws.' First, "looking over the field of history there is evident a law of continuity. All events, conditions, institutions, personalities, come from immediately preceding events, conditions, institutions, personalities. . . . The continuity of history is not merely a fact; it is a law."[36] "Second, looking over the field of history, there seems to be a law of impermanence, of mutability. The fall of empires is one of the most familiar of historic phenomena. . . . So persistent and infinitely repeated has been this disappearance of successive organizations of men and types of civilization that it gives every indication of being the result of a law rather than of a mere succession of chances."[37] "Thirdly, looking over the field of history there seems to be a law of interdependence—interdependence of individuals, of classes, of tribes, of nations. The human race seems to be essentially an organism, a unit. No part of the human race in history has really progressed by the injury of another."[38] "Fourthly, there seems to be a law of democracy, a tendency for all government to come under the control of all the people."[39]

[35] E. P. Cheney, as cited, p. 246.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 237.
[37] *Ibid.*, p. 238.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 240.
[39] *Ibid.*, p. 241.

"Fifthly, looking over the field of history I am convinced there is a law of necessity for free consent. Human beings are free agents in their relations to other human beings; they cannot permanently be compelled. Not only should all government be by the consent of the governed but all government has been by the consent of the governed."[40] "Sixthly, and lastly, so far as this groping search extends, there seems to be a law of moral progress. Obscurely and slowly, yet visibly and measurably, moral influences in human affairs have become stronger and more widely extended than material influences."[41] If we look over these points, as enumerated, it will, I think, become apparent that what Professor Cheney has assembled are sentences contributory to a definition of the idea of progress. His 'laws' are heads of discourse taken unconsciously from the discussions of progress during the last two hundred and fifty years. His formulation, then, is simply an added demonstration of the pervading influence of the idea of progress in our present-day thought, as well as of the type of result to which this idea inevitably leads.

Professor Cheney's address is to be accepted as an important event in American historical scholarship, for it is tangible evidence of the growing appreciation of the need for scientific method in historical study. It is of importance, therefore, to examine the procedure which Professor Cheney thinks proper for the discovery of laws. "What," he asks, "are these laws like?" "There is but one way to find out—to do as others in their various fields have done before, to consider the phenomena, to make a more or less happy guess at some large principle, then to test it by a wider comparison with the facts; if so be that a generalization can be found which we can fairly call a law of history."[42] Now this statement describes, with essential accuracy, the methodology of the Cartesian period, from which the 'Newtonians' of the

[40] E. P. Cheney, as cited, p. 243.
[41] *Ibid.*, p. 244.
[42] *Ibid.*, p. 236.

early eighteenth century made earnest efforts to escape. The results at which science aims to-day are not, however, vague 'guesses,' derived from a general inspection of any broad field of inquiry, but are accurate descriptions of the way in which things 'work' to bring about the results which we are given in experience. It is not sufficient, in our present situation, to echo Buckle. Professor Cheney's contribution emphasizes the necessity which confronts the humanist for familiarizing himself with the historical background of methodological conceptions in his own field, of recognizing the influence upon his thought of the ever present idea of 'progress,' of forming a clear conception of the results at which science aims, and of the steps which are necessary for their determination.

The three phases of thought described above are fully represented in the work of M. Henri Berr, the projector and editor of what may be regarded as the most ambitious effort of historical scholarship in our generation, the series of volumes entitled *L'évolution de l'humanité*.[43]

For a quarter of a century, M. Berr has advocated a 'new' history, designated 'la synthèse historique,' which he sets in opposition to 'l'histoire traditionnelle.' Despite the author's criticism of 'la synthèse érudite' and 'les historiens intuitifs,'[44] the difference between the new and the old is not readily apparent. Apart from the introductions provided by the editor, the separate volumes of *L'évolution de l'humanité* would scarcely impress the reader as a new departure in historical inquiry. The series, as described by M. Berr, is to constitute a 'universal history.' In his opinion, the mass of detailed information accumulated by historical scholars in recent times has now forced upon us the necessity for some

[43] For exposition of his views, see: Henri Berr, *L'avenir de la philosophie, esquisse d'une synthèse des connaissances fondée sur l'histoire* (Paris, 1899); *La synthèse en histoire, essai critique et théorique* (Paris, 1911); "Introduction générale," in Edmond Perrier, *La terre avant l'histoire* (Paris, 1920), pp. v-xxvi; *L'histoire traditionnelle et la synthèse historique* (Paris, 1921).

[44] *La synthèse en histoire,* pp. 5-14, 232-242.

kind of synthesis; while the solidarity of mankind, the unity which a world-politics, a world-economics, a world-civilization has introduced, "invites us to reflect upon the rôle which the world factor has played from the beginning." There is room, M. Berr thinks, for a new synthesis "which shall include Humanity, from its origins, and the Earth as a whole." The special feature which is to distinguish this new synthesis is that it will have 'a real unity': history in its entirety, bound together by unity of plan and unity of directive ideas.[45] The new synthesis will be marked by a preoccupation with 'l'ensemble,' the whole as such.[46] The point of view here expressed is, obviously, a familiar one. Many efforts of the same sort have been made since the publication of Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire universelle*, and the composition of a world history has at all times implied the presence of a unifying idea in the mind of the writer. It cannot be said, therefore, that in its most general aspects the programme of M. Berr marks a supersession of established procedure.

The aim of M. Berr's theoretical discussion of synthesis in history is to lay the foundation for a narrative of universal history, and this aim brings him to face the problem of the selection of materials to be incorporated in his construction. Here, again, the phraseology employed is familiar. Some facts, he says, are insignificant, others are important. We can dominate and systematize the past only by making eliminations, as accident has already done for the remote past, and we must consign to oblivion something even of what has been preserved. The historian must be prepared to reject "negligible events" ('les contingences négligeables').[47] In this process of elimination, the new synthesis will, he thinks, be more effective than the old in determining what is of importance in history, and what is to be ignored.[48] It would appear, however, that in taking this point of view,

[45] *Introduction générale*, p. vi.
[46] *Ibid.*, p. xix.
[47] *Ibid.*, p. xii.
[48] *La synthèse en histoire*, p. 21.

M. Berr has, to a certain extent, overlooked the fact that selection proceeds, under all circumstances, with reference to the particular interests of the individual historian. What is actually implied in his statement is that the new synthesis will be able to decide 'plus efficacement' than the old what facts are of importance or the reverse—for the new synthesis. In short, M. Berr's *Synthèse en histoire* is a special logic ("un traité de logique spéciale") designed to provide a basis for the selection of facts to be presented in his particular universal history.

It is admitted at once that this is not M. Berr's conception of the significance of his efforts. In his view, the great need of the present is that historical synthesis or construction should be placed upon a scientific basis. Scientific inquiry, in his opinion, is the investigation of causes. The procedure of historians in dealing with causation, he points out, has been a naïve reliance upon intuitive estimates of personal motives and of individual character.[49] In opposition to this procedure, he proposes that historical synthesis should be made scientific in the fullest sense of the word[50] by means of an analysis of causation. His ambition is to determine in an exact manner the method of science in relation to history,[51] and to provide a basis for a scientific synthesis of the history of mankind by making a conceptual analysis of the nature of the causes operative in history.[52] It must be understood, however, that M. Berr's inquiry, in *La synthèse en histoire,* is not an investigation of historical facts for the purpose of arriving inductively at 'causes,' but consists in a critical examination and putting together of the views of different theorists in regard to causation in the historical field.[53]

In his effort "to unravel the tangled skein of causality,"

[49] *La synthèse en histoire,* pp. 48, 53, 117.
[50] *Ibid.,* p. 23; *Introduction générale,* pp. viii, xvi, xxiv.
[51] *La synthèse en histoire,* p. 258.
[52] *Ibid.,* pp. 42, 53, 260.
[53] *Ibid.,* pp. viii, 38-39, 42, 53-54.

M. Berr discovers three kinds of causal relations in human evolution: relations of mere succession, where the facts are simply determined by others; relations that are constant, where the facts are linked to others by necessity; and relations of internal linkage, where the facts are rationally connected with others. These causal relations correspond to three orders of facts, or elements of history, which he describes as: contingent, accidental, or crude facts, representing the fortuitous element or 'hasard' in history; necessary facts, institutions or social necessities, representing the element of immobility or repetition; facts of 'inner logic,' representing the element of 'tendance et durée,' the direction and continuance of movement.[54] These kinds of relation and types of fact, it should be observed, correspond to the respective interests of 'traditional' history, sociology, and the philosophy of progress or evolution.[55] M. Berr's theory of synthesis, then, is that the construction of a universal history, if it is to be scientific, must embody the results arrived at, in their separate fields, by historians, sociologists, and 'evolutionary' philosophers. Since M. Berr remains a theorist, and does not himself essay the task of historical construction, his undertaking is completed when he has arrived at this conclusion.

In his writings, which are wholly theoretical, M. Berr has enumerated certain classes of data, factual and conceptual, with which the humanist of to-day must be prepared to reckon. He cannot ignore 'events,' 'institutions,' or the idea of 'progress.' The enumeration of these elements, however, does not of itself bring them into relation; for one reason, because they represent different categories of ideas. History, for example, is a record of facts of a particular order, namely, 'events.' Sociology, as described by M. Berr, is the study of institutions, that is, of entities which have a more or less continuous existence, which are subject to modifica-

[54] *La synthèse en histoire,* p. 159; *Introduction générale,* pp. viii-ix, xv.
[55] *Cf. La synthèse en histoire,* pp. 55 ff., 114 ff., 140 ff.

tion and change, and which may be affected by 'events.' The idea of 'progress' or of 'evolution' represents the intellectual effort to grasp the significance of change in relation to some given class of entities, this change being conceived as independent of the influence of 'events.' The idea of 'progress' is a product of reflection, and involves the belief that there is a progressive movement in human affairs, that this movement is continuous, and that it proceeds in a desirable direction.

In the presence of this highly complex situation in humanistic study, M. Berr surrenders the possibility of introducing a clarification of thought and of procedure by giving his unqualified adherence to the belief in the idea of 'progress.' "We are concerned," he says, "with retracing the road which humanity has travelled; with retracing that road (which a blind instinct, obscure forces, and a multiplicity of circumstances have forced it to take) by understanding why it has been followed. In the course of the ages, amid the efforts, ambitions, struggles, and the varied destinies of groups, in spite of stumblings, detours, and setbacks, humanity advances."[56] The influence of M. Berr's adherence to this belief is apparent throughout his work. The aim of inquiry, he says, is to render intelligible and to enable us to follow the progressive movement which gives meaning to the life of humanity.[57] In M. Berr's procedure, however, an understanding of this movement is to be derived, not from historical investigation, but from analysis of what he describes as the 'inner logic' of evolution or progress. This logical factor, M. Berr believes, "is explanatory in the most profound sense of the word; it is that which gives to evolution its real continuity, its inner law." It is the inner principle of evolution. The logical factor it is which alone produces the new in the course of time; it alone is creative.[58]

[56] *Introduction générale,* p. xx.
[57] *Ibid.,* p. xvi.
[58] *Cf. La synthèse en histoire,* p. 155; *Introduction générale,* p. xii; *L'histoire traditionnelle,* p. 47.

Logic itself, however, proceeds from a principle which is the motive force of history, namely, "la tendance de l'être à persévérer dans son être, la tendance de l'être à être pleinement, à être sans limites."[59] So the phenomena of history come to be explained in terms such as a 'will to change,' a 'will to growth,' and a 'will to culture.'[60] In the last analysis, logic is defined by M. Berr as the scientific equivalent of the doctrine of final cause; the inner movement of history is teleological, and represents "la causalité de l'utile ou du bien."[61]

A consideration of M. Berr's theory of historical synthesis, then, brings to light one or two points of some interest for the present discussion. In the first place, while he says that "it is when we reject negligible events that the rôle of 'logic' in the life of societies is best realized," what he actually means is that the 'logical factor' can only be made to appear if we reject such historical evidence as is in conflict with this conception. The facts to be incorporated in universal history are to be selected in the light of their accordance with his theory of an 'inner logic.' In the second place, his theory assumes the validity of the idea of progress; if this be rejected, his system disappears. In the third place, his explanation of universal history in terms of 'inner logic,' like all explanations which are based upon an acceptance of the idea of progress, leads beyond any possible scientific activity by requiring the supposition of a 'mysterious impulse,' an 'inner principle,' an *élan vital.* Briefly, the assumption of progress, as a directive concept in the study of history, leads beyond the facts to some such philosophical system as that of M. Bergson.[62]

In no one of the social sciences has the problem of method evoked a wider interest than in anthropology. As has been

[59] *La synthèse en histoire,* p. 158; *Introduction générale,* p. xii.

[60] *Introduction générale,* p. xiii: "une 'volonté de changement,' une 'volonté d'accroissement,' une 'volonté de culture.' "

[61] *La synthèse en histoire,* p. 149.

[62] *Ibid.,* p. 144.

pointed out earlier, the movement of thought in this field has been toward recognition of the fact that the cultures of backward or primitive groups must be regarded, equally with those of advanced peoples, as products or results of activities in the past, and hence as calling for historical investigation. While it is true that written documents are not available for the study of the cultural history of backward groups, this does not mean that the possibility of historical inquiry must be abandoned; it simply means that the anthropologist or ethnologist will be forced to employ a technique in his inquiries different from that employed in the study of the cultures of Europe. This difference in technique must not be permitted, however, to obscure the fact that the methodological problem in anthropology is identical with that in history.

Notwithstanding the movement of thought to which reference has just been made, it must be admitted that anthropologists in general, when they turn from the labor of describing existing cultures to the work of interpreting the data collected, cling tenaciously to methodological conceptions inherited from the eighteenth century. The result of this adherence is that investigation based upon actual historical evidence is still subordinated to the procedure of elaborating arguments in regard to the origin and development of culture in terms of conceptual abstractions. To observe the consequences of this procedure, it will be necessary only to examine the *Man and Culture* of Clark Wissler, published in 1923.

In its most general aspect, Dr. Wissler's book is a discussion of "the fundamental similarities between cultures."[63] "A state of parallelism exists," he remarks, "whatever be the cause."[64] As a consequence of this point of departure, a considerable part of the work (chs. 6-9) is occupied with a presentation of the usual views as to how cultures have come

[63] Clark Wissler, *Man and Culture* (New York, 1923), p. 77.
[64] *Ibid.*, p. 194.

to be similar, *i.e.*, through independent invention, diffusion, and convergence, in which, as was to be expected, the emphasis falls upon the process of 'diffusion,' natural or organized. This statement of accepted views is to be regarded, however, merely as a background for the author's explanation of similarities. Examination of different human groups leads Wissler to observe that while actual cultures vary in their contents, they fall into types, so that any given culture may be regarded as a variant of some one of a limited number of types.[65] Further, while these types vary, they will all fit into one general picture or pattern, and this general pattern for culture has prevailed since the earliest stone age.[66] The universal pattern is arrived at by observing that when we have made a purely conceptual 'culture scheme' or classification of culture elements, by abstraction from the actual specific cultures existing in the world, "the same general outline will fit all of them."[67] Thus, as a result of an initial concentration of attention on similarities, the author is led to notice that the content of actual cultures may be classified under a number of headings,[68] and this fact he erects into a conceptual entity, designated 'the universal pattern.' Subsequently, it is this entity which takes precedence, and the author discovers, first, that "the universal pattern, like a new kind of germ-plasm, fastens its inherent form upon each infant culture,"[69] and, second, that similarities "stand as the triumphs of the universal pattern."[70] In other words, he finds that similarities are the expression of similarity.

More specifically, Wissler takes the view that one of the principal aims of anthropology is the investigation of ori-

[65] Clark Wissler, as cited, pp. 25, 32, 55, *etc.*

[66] *Ibid.*, p. 226.

[67] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

[68] The culture scheme is given on p. 74; its main divisions are: 1. Speech, 2. Material traits, 3. Art, 4. Mythology and scientific knowledge, 5. Religious practices, 6. Family and social systems, 7. Property, 8. Government, 9. War.

[69] *Ibid.*, p. 223.

[70] *Ibid.*, p. 232.

gins. Since history is unequal to this task, it must devolve upon the analytic student of culture.[71] He argues, then, that the problem of the origin of culture resolves itself into the problem of the origin of the universal pattern,[72] with which history can have nothing to do.[73] Following this step, he is led to discover that the factors which determine the universal pattern lie in the 'original nature' of man, and consequently it is to this we must look for the 'primary' origin of culture.[74] Since there is no great difference between the individual problem and that of the race, we may, he thinks, regard the universal pattern as being largely determined by the number and kind of the inborn responses which the baby possesses. The universal pattern is the functional pattern for inborn human behavior. The pattern is based upon psycho-physical functions, which are inborn, and is to be considered nothing less than a 'set' in the germ-plasm of man.[75] Thus similarities are explained as being due to the 'nature' of man, which is just the assumption with which the methodologists of the eighteenth century started out.

A second important aspect of Dr. Wissler's book is his theory of progress. Here it should be observed that the author concerns himself primarily with Culture as an objective body of data, independent of human beings.[76] In his view, therefore, "tribes may come and tribes may go, but culture goes on forever."[77] Culture is a 'true continuum'; it constitutes a unitary series, from which "nothing really important seems to have been lost to the world."[78] Culture has a career,[79] and this Wissler envisages as a march upward and onward which has proceeded with an ever accelerating

71 Clark Wissler, as cited, p. 246.
72 *Ibid.*, pp. 260-265.
73 *Ibid.*, p. 263.
74 *Ibid.*, p. 269.
75 *Ibid.*, pp. 256, 264, 267, 272, 279.
76 *Ibid.*, pp. 49, 99, 108, 181, 252, *etc.*
77 *Ibid.*, p. 39.
78 *Ibid.*, pp. 36, 39, 40, 179.
79 *Ibid.*, p. 326.

pace.[80] Culture is a whole which has grown by accumulation.[81] The evolution or progress of this whole consists in the 'elaboration and enrichment' of its content, but it is to be understood that civilization is a matter of bulk rather than of complexity.[82]

While Culture as a whole grows by accumulation, actual culture-systems, identified with tribal or national entities, rise and fall, following out their careers according to discoverable laws.[83] "In reality, what we find in culture is one endless round of cycles."[84] "Tribal cultures have life cycles, like individuals of a species; they spring from parent cultures, grow, mature, beget other cultures, decline and eventually die."[85] Life cycles are thus repeated, though the content of different culture-systems is not necessarily identical. "It is not to be expected that two cultures will run through their life cycles with the same absolute sequence of events, but they do tend to travel on the same type curve."[86] All culture-systems are identified with areas, and, from time to time, the center, or most typical culture, shifts its geographical position, "not unlike the passing of life's activities from father to son."[87]

It will be observed that in these theories of progress we have two distinct conceptions of what has happened in the past, and the separation between them becomes even clearer when we examine Wissler's attitude toward historical inquiry. First, then, corresponding to the unitary theory of culture as a whole growing by accumulation, we find the results of analytical investigation stated in the form of a generalized unilinear history of culture,[88] or of generalized

80 Clark Wissler, as cited, pp. 255, 326.
81 *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 40, 41, *etc.*
82 *Ibid.*, p. 97.
83 *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 179, 195, 198, 223, 239, 247.
84 *Ibid.*, p. 198.
85 *Ibid.*, p. 212.
86 *Ibid.*, p. 195.
87 *Ibid.*, p. 204.
88 *Ibid.*, chs. 11 and 17.

histories of culture-traits, such as 'horse culture' and the 'maize complex.'[89] Second, corresponding to the pluralistic theory that separate culture-systems are like individuals, we find the results of historical inquiry stated in the form of a scheme or model of the *modus operandi* of change. That this distinction is made consciously is evident from the author's statement that a knowledge of "the worldwide evolution of culture" is not to be attained by "the circumscribed study of historical cultures."[90] In Wissler's view, the work of history is the study of actual culture-systems in their temporal relations, as distinguished from the study of culture as a whole. Historical study is concerned with the varying fortunes of the specific cultures of the world, but it appears to him a serious limitation that historical study can do no more than reveal the identity of the 'fortuitous causes' to which differences in culture-systems are due.[91] A tribal culture, he says, is a collection of 'trait-complexes,'[92] and it is only by historical inquiry that 'the concrete specific content' of the culture of any given group is to be explained.[93] To account for the association of the elements represented in a culture-system it is necessary to have information of the events that brought them into relation. The events that have had the most potent influence on the make-up of culture-systems have been associated with military activities. "Everywhere in the world the tendency has been for culture areas to develop dominant centers and then to become the seats of militarism."[94] What we see in history, then, is the continual shifting of culture centers as a result of war. While a single geographical area may for a time hold priority, it does so but for a period, to be outstripped in turn by another; at its fall, some other virile center has always been ready to

[89] Clark Wissler, as cited, pp. 110-127.
[90] *Ibid.*, p. 246.
[91] *Ibid.*, p. 279.
[92] *Ibid.*, p. 71.
[93] *Ibid.*, p. 263.
[94] *Ibid.*, pp. 164-180, 341.

snatch up the torch of light and dash forward, and "in each historic case the scepter has passed on to the hands of a wilder, less domesticated group of people."[95]

It will be seen, then, that there are represented in Dr. Wissler's book two different lines of approach to the study of man, and two conflicting conceptions of the method to be employed. In the first instance, by making abstraction from the concrete data of culture, the author arrives at 'similarities,' and, by abstraction from similarities, reaches his idea of a 'universal pattern'; this pattern he undertakes to explain by reference to the 'original nature' of man. In the second place, he begins by pointing out that what we are given in experience is a relatively large number of different cultures, and recognizes throughout the book that the study of differences can be conducted only by the utilization of actual historical facts; the outcome of this procedure is a generalized model of the way in which change has been brought about in the course of time. The conclusion to which we are brought is that the presence of conflicting and irreconcilable modes of procedure in the recent work of an acknowledged authority in the field of anthropology is evidence of the imperative need for a reconsideration of existing conceptions of scientific method in humanistic inquiry.

It is evident, then, that in the fields of history and anthropology the discussions of method which have occupied so important a place in the literature of these subjects during the last quarter of a century have effected nothing toward overcoming the separation between historical and 'scientific' inquiries in the study of society, or toward bringing to light the difficulties created by the acceptance of the idea of progress as the directive concept in the humanities.

When we turn to consider the activities of economists and sociologists, we find that, in these fields, no revision of the methodological conceptions inherited from the nineteenth

[95] Clark Wissler, as cited, pp. 179, 221, 358.

and eighteenth centuries has been made. So evident is this fact that extended analyses are not called for to bring it to light. The vigorous efforts of the 'historical school' of economists in the nineteenth century resulted merely in adding the study of economic history to the older study of economic theory; and while dissatisfaction is openly expressed, at the present time, with the condition of economic theory, the theoretical foundations upon which it is based appear to be accepted simply 'as given.' In sociology the field is still divided, as in Comte's system, between the analytical study of 'society' (with a growing emphasis on ameliorative interests) and the discussion of theories of 'progress.' So little attention, indeed, has been given to the consideration of the procedure followed in this subject that, in 1924, a prominent sociologist, proposing to give an historical account of the *Origins of Sociology*, could make the statement that nothing had been written before 1800 that could be connected with "the creative course of our specialty."

In the year 1859, three approaches to the investigation of 'how things have come to be as they are' were open to humanists: first, that of Auguste Comte, inspired by the idea of 'progress' and based upon the conception that the aim of scientific inquiry is the formulation of the 'law' of progress, meaning thereby a generalized description of the successive steps in the uniform development of mankind; second, that of Charles Darwin, inspired by the idea of 'evolution,' based upon the conception (suggested by the work of the geologists Hutton and Lyell) that the aim of scientific inquiry is the discovery of the process or processes uniformly manifested in changes in the forms of life, these changes being assumed to be invariably slow, gradual, and continuous; third, that of Hume and Turgot, inspired by the observation of the marked differences in the present condition of mankind, and having for its aim the determination of the processes manifested in persistence and in slow modification, the determination of the conditions under which rapid change actually takes place, and of the processes manifested in such circumstances.

The first and second of these modes of procedure have their origin, so far as modern thought is concerned, in the Cartesian assumption of motion as the basic phenomenon of the universe. The common element in the thought of Comte and Darwin is an acceptance of the reality of a progressive movement in time. Each alike assumes that this progressive movement is 'natural,' that it is independent of the 'accidental' circumstances of which history and experience are constituted. Each alike assumes that this progressive movement proceeds slowly and continuously toward a determined end in perfection. This form of thought appears both in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries as a reaction against the Christian doctrine of the constant participation of Providence in the direction of the affairs of men. The philosophy of Descartes, however, accepted the view that God

is continuously modifying things in accordance with a plan, and deviated from the accepted theology simply in maintaining that the direction of the affairs of the universe was not carried on by sporadic arbitrary actions, but in accordance with fixed modes of procedure, the laws of nature, which had been arbitrarily set up. The teleology of Descartes has entered into all theories of progress and of evolution, and hence it is not remarkable that contemporary logicians should have reached the conclusion that these theories involve the postulate of a 'vital principle.'

The difficulties which the humanist must meet at the present time arise from his acceptance of the idea of progress as the directive concept in the study of man. In consequence of the assumption that science is concerned with what is 'natural,' as distinguished from what is 'accidental,' separation was made between historical inquiry and the 'social sciences,' with the result that each of these types of investigation continues to pursue its course in isolation from the other. All social phenomena, however, are in the strictest sense 'historical,' and there can be no scientific study of man until this separation has been overcome.

If, then, we are to arrive at the desideratum of a science of man (or of 'society'), we must face the problem presented by the current acceptance of the idea of progress as an interpretation of human history. The difficulty will, in large measure, be resolved if we recognize the difference between a *belief in progress* and a *belief in the possibility of progress.* To believe in progress is to adopt a supine attitude toward existence; is to cultivate an enthusiasm for whatever chance may bring; is to assume that perfection and happiness lie ahead, whatever may be the course of human action in the present. To restrict belief to the *possibility* of progress implies recognition of the fact that change may result in destruction as readily as in advancement; implies consciousness of the precariousness of human achievement, as witnessed in the fate of 'Nineveh and Tyre.' Belief in progress rests upon

the assumption that 'all is for the best,' but wavers between the views (1) that the 'natural' activities of men, if freed from artificial restraints, must necessarily lead to a perfect condition of social existence, and (2) that this desirable condition is to be reached only through the regulation of 'natural' activities by legislation—based upon intuitive judgments. Belief in the *possibility* of progress forces upon us the question, 'How may this possibility be realized?'; it leads us to understand that, if human advancement is to be assured, the activities of men must be directed by knowledge. This knowledge cannot be arrived at by any mere expression of good-will; it cannot be achieved even by the most complete coöperation with "the mysterious unconscious impulse" which is "the vital principle of betterment." The knowledge upon which the future depends will require the full utilization of the resources which society has accumulated in institutions of learning. The acquisition of this knowledge is the task to which humanists must set themselves in the interests of their fellow men.

INDEX

Teggart, Frederick John, 1870–

Theory of history, by Frederick J. Teggart ... New Haven, Yale university; [etc., etc.,] 1925.

xix, 231 p. 24cm.

"The present volume is the fifth work published by the Yale university press on the Philip Hamilton McMillan memorial publication fund."

1. History—Methodology. I. Yale university. Philip Hamilton McMillan memorial publication fund.

Library of Congress D16.T25 CCSC/ef 26—1658